

Teacher Training for Bilingual Education of Deaf Students in Brazil

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Abstract : The education of deaf individuals in Brazil is grounded in the bilingual approach, which presupposes Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) as the first language for these students. In this perspective, Portuguese should be taught as a second language in its written form, ensuring that deaf students also have access to various academic subjects in sign language. Brazilian legislation (Federal Decree No. 5626 of 2005) mandates the teaching of Brazilian Sign Language in university teacher training programs, but there is no pre-established minimum workload. As a result, there is a significant disparity in the teaching and quality of teacher education across the Brazilian territory. Added to this fact is the general lack of awareness within society regarding the linguistic status of Libras, leading to a shortage of competent teachers for its use and instruction, particularly in higher education. Recently, Federal Law No. 14191 of 2021 established bilingual education for the deaf as a mode of instruction, indicating the need for adjustments in teacher training within higher education teacher preparation programs. Given this context, the objective of the present study was to analyze the teaching proposals for Brazilian Sign Language for students in teacher training programs at public universities in Brazil, presenting alternatives to overcome the current models and academic pathways of teaching and learning. In addition to analyzing Brazilian teaching models, an analysis of a continuing education model for teachers in a French institution was also conducted - considering the historical Franco-Brazilian path of deaf education in Brazil. The analysis of the current teacher training model for deaf education in Brazil revealed that initial exposure to sign language and its linguistic structure is not sufficient to provide future teachers with opportunities to reflect on bilingual teaching methods and practices, as seen in other definitions of bilingualism - bilingual education for proficient listeners in two oral languages. As a result, a training proposal was developed for an experimental interdisciplinary course, integrating the curriculum of an initial and continuing teacher training program alongside the Alfredo Bossi Chair at the University of São Paulo. This proposal is structured into three disciplines, which constitute consecutive moments in teacher education: Fundamental Aspects of Brazilian Sign Language, Bilingual Teaching Methodology, and Teaching Investigation Project - interdisciplinary engagement in the field of deafness. The last offered discipline represents an interdisciplinary supervised internship proposal, considering the multi-professional context that constitutes deaf education within a bilingual approach. In interdisciplinary work within the field of deafness, dialogue between teachers and other professionals who work with deaf students from different perspectives - teachers, speech therapists, and sign language interpreters - is frequently necessary. Through alternative avenues, these actions aim to direct the linguistic development of deaf students within their learning processes. Based on the innovative curriculum proposal described here, the intention is to contribute to the enhancement of teacher education in Brazil, with the goal of ensuring bilingual education for deaf students.

Keywords : bilingual education, teacher training, historical-cultural approach, interdisciplinary education, inclusive education

Conference Title : ICHE 2024 : International Conference on Higher Education

Conference Location : Montreal, Canada

Conference Dates : May 23-24, 2024