

"Elfing in Bilingual Early Childhood Education"?: Discussing the English used in Bilingual Education of Prestigious languages

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Abstract:

Due to its fluid, dynamic, and plural nature, the perspective of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) represents a break from hegemonic standards, legitimizing various speakers and contexts. In the field of prestigious bilingual education, there is still a strong presence of the hegemony of knowledge and culture imposed by the Global North. Therefore, this work aims to present a proposal from the ELF perspective for childhood bilingual education outlined in the Global Kids bilingual portfolio (El Kadri; Saviolli, 2022), demonstrating the possibilities and potentials of ELF for English language teaching in the bi/multilingual context. We conclude that the analyzed material presents itself as a "made in Brazil" proposal, seeking to associate critical and local themes with bilingual education and aligning with pedagogical implications of the perspective (Gimenez, 2009), with an emphasis on communicative and accommodation skills, and a focus on multilingualism (Calvo et al., 2022). Such characteristics contribute to the construction of planetary citizenship. In light of the analyzed material, we emphasize the importance of local production of materials and proposals for prestigious bilingual education, moving away from the ideology of native speakers and considering local knowledge and the plurality of languages and cultures.

Keywords: English as a Lingua Franca; Prestigious Bilingual Education; Didactic materials.

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INTRODUCTION

Research in the field of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has advanced and progressed rapidly over the years, from its initial understanding as a "variety" with the need for a "lingua franca core" (Jenkins, 2000) to constant resignifications that have positioned it as a set of practices (Sewell, 2013) and the way people appropriate the language in different parts of the world (Diniz de Figueiredo; Siqueira, 2021). The most recent understandings of ELF emphasize its empowering and fluid aspect, associated with the perspective of translanguage (García, 2009). However, progress and speed in discussions about ELF have not been seen when it comes to the incorporation of ELF into classroom practices: for a long time, researchers have pointed out the distancing of these practices from research development (Gimenez; El Kadri; Calvo, 2018; Siqueira, 2018). The adoption of the ELF perspective in the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) (Brasil, 2018), the main guiding document for language teaching in Brazil today, which places the ELF perspective in a central position, seems to highlight ELF as the guiding perspective for language teaching proposals. However, teachers and researchers involved in the analysis of didactic materials can attest that the discourse is present in new proposals, but little has changed in terms of practical proposals (Gimenez; El Kadri; Calvo, 2018).

At times, the perspective of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has been misunderstood, as there is some confusion between discussing the use of ELF versus the "teaching of ELF." It is worth emphasizing the impossibility of "teaching ELF" since it is not a language variety (Sewell, 2013). We refer to ELF as a perspective for looking at the English language to bring the implications of this status into the classroom. Thus, we propose recognizing and incorporating the implications of ELF in teaching because, from this perspective, ELF is an attitude (Gimenez *et al.*, 2015; Rombaldi, 2023). It is a shift in perspective towards objectives and purposes, such as emphasizing effective communication (Calvo *et al.*, 2022) and assessment (Gomes de Lima; Silva Machado, 2021) in language teaching. Therefore, considering the implications of ELF for teaching seems appropriate in the context of English language instruction in the public school system, especially due to the empowering nature (El Kadri, 2010) projected by this perspective for bilingual speakers.

Similarly, the BNCC (Brazilian National Common Core Curriculum) explains that the status of a lingua franca refers to a language characterized by fluidity and driven by multilingual speakers. Consequently, the document prioritizes the "focus on the social and political function of English and, in this sense, begins to treat it in its status as a lingua franca" (Brasil, 2018, p. 241). It adds that the different uses speakers make of this language around the world are embraced and legitimized in this perspective, to "question the view that the only 'correct' English – and to be taught – is that spoken by Americans or Britons" (Brasil, 2018, p. 241). Furthermore, it "uncouples from the notion of belonging [to the language] to a specific territory" (Brasil, 2018, p. 242). Although the BNCC is not intended for Early Childhood Education, we understand that the conceptualization of English as a lingua franca would also be appropriate for this teaching segment

due to the empowering aspect of the ILF perspective for the identities of Brazilian bilingual speakers.

In this text, we problematize the use of English in bi/multilingual school contexts, proposing English as a lingua franca as an attempt to empower the identities of bilingual speakers (El Kadri, 2010), here referred to as "Elfing" (a combination of the ELF acronym and the English prefix -ing, intended to convey a sense of attitude and action towards the L1). The relevance of bringing the ELF perspective to bilingual education contexts lies in the need to question the value attributed to native speakers in this context and, consequently, the need to destabilize colonial practices that contribute little to the empowerment of Brazilian bilingual speakers. We believe that bilingual education has the potential to favor transformative practices, challenge the *status quo*, facilitate access to alternative narratives, and empower bilingual speakers through the questioning of "English" as a means of instruction. In this text, we specifically address the question of "which English" we bring as a tool for accessing curricular content. Thus, Bilingual education aims to develop linguistic proficiency in both instructional languages, facilitate learning and articulation of diverse content, foster the development of skills and competencies that enhance students' engagement with the world, and promote the development of intercultural competencies (Megale; El Kadri, 2023), which means that the content is delivered through another language. In this text, we are referring specifically to English as the medium of instruction.

To do so, we briefly present the theoretical perspective that underpins this article, as well as the methodological framework used. Next, we present the analysis of a didactic proposal designed for childhood bilingual education in a public bilingual school, focusing on how ELF permeated, as a principle, the materialization of this perspective. Finally, we present the concluding remarks and the references used.

A LITTLE BIT OF ELF

According to Seidlhofer (2005), English assumes the character of an International Lingua Franca (ELF) when "chosen as a means of communication among people from different linguistic backgrounds and overcoming linguistic-cultural barriers" (Seidlhofer, 2005, p. 339). Additionally, Jenkins, Baker e Dewey (2018) defines ELF as the diverse and fluid use of the English language that transcends linguistic and cultural barriers and is situated within the realm of multilingualism.

Similarly, Diniz de Figueiredo and Siqueira (2021) argue that, regarding ELF, the focus should be on the plurilingual nature of communication and define the concept as the interaction between interlocutors from different linguistic contexts through a language shared by them.

Continuing to articulate the effects of globalization and the expansion of the English language, Gimenez (2015) states that " ELF integrates a framework in which linguistic and economic factors cannot be disregarded in their relationships with globalization" and "aligns with discourses that seek the erasure of borders/nations in the relationship between people from different parts of the world" (Gimenez, 2015, p. 75). Thus, by embracing the diversity and plurality of English language use in the context of ELF, complex issues emerge regarding power relations, language ownership, decoloniality, identity, and learner empowerment.

According to the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) in Brasil (2018), understanding the status of the English language as a lingua franca means questioning language ownership and challenging and dissociating the notion of belonging to a territory and its respective culture. Similarly, for Gimenez (2015), understanding English as a lingua franca represents an attempt and desire to detach the language from territories and nations, assuming a decolonial character. Moreover, Mignolo and Walsh (2018 *apud* Rosa; Duboc, 2022, p. 845) affirm that "decoloniality aims to deconstruct this hierarchical system of power, undoing, disobeying, and disconnecting from the colonial matrix so that other ways of thinking, feeling, believing, doing,

and living become possible." This movement, according to the BNCC, "favors a linguistic education focused on interculturality, that is, the recognition of (and respect for) differences, and the understanding of how they are produced in various social language practices, promoting critical reflection on different ways of seeing and analyzing the world, others, and oneself" (Brasil, 2018, p. 242).

It is important to emphasize that English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) does not refer to a linguistic variation but rather to a set of practices (Sewell, 2013) and how people appropriate the language in different parts of the world (Diniz de Figueiredo; Siqueira, 2021). Thus, it is not possible to teach English as a lingua franca *per se*, but rather to consider the implications of its status as a lingua franca in teaching. In other words, it is possible to teach through this perspective, according to the fundamental aspects of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) listed by Calvo *et al.* (2022, p. 149), for example:

- (i) emphasis on the diversity of English rather than varieties from the inner circle or a single variety;
- (ii) emphasis on multilingualism rather than monolingualism;
- (iii) emphasis on content and accommodation, including the use of pragmatic and communication strategies to facilitate understanding, rather than linguistic precision.

Similarly, Gimenez (2009, p. 7) lists some pedagogical implications of applying the perspective of English as a Lingua Franca in English language teaching:

1. The need for greater clarification of the political aspects of language learning;
2. Expansion of the range of decisions about English varieties to be taught;
3. Less emphasis on teaching pronunciation centered on the native speaker;
4. Development of oral and written expression skills as important learning focuses;
5. Awareness of the role of the English language in the process of globalization and the maintenance of social inequalities;
6. Articulation between the local and the global, constituting the notion of planetary citizenship;
7. Inclusion of critical perspectives in language learning;

Thus, with the ELF perspective, the focus of English language teaching shifts from "institutionalized grammar rules to the encouragement of negotiation among the various grammars and linguistic-cultural repertoires that emerge from communicative situations in English" (Jordão; Marques, 2018 *apud* Duboc, 2019, p. 18).

Teaching English through the ELF perspective represents an act of empowerment for the learner by establishing goals linked to the need for international communication (El Kadri, 2010), distancing them from the molds of the native speaker through a decolonial perspective and the appreciation of the student's repertoire.

Therefore, when we discuss English as a Lingua Franca, we have a fluid and volatile conceptual system that is constantly developing and addresses complex themes inherent to language teaching and learning, such as the decolonial issue (Rosa; Duboc, 2022), the identity formation of the learner (El Kadri, 2010), as well as power relations (El Kadri, 2010) and language ownership (Canagarajah, 2022; El Kadri, 2010).

In the following chapter, we present the methodology used to guide this research, and later on, we present our reflections on the ELF perspective in childhood bilingual education through the analysis of the Global Kids portfolio (El Kadri; Saviolli, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

This article is the result of a qualitative-interpretative research approach (Bortoni-Ricardo,

2008). We analyzed the Bilingual portfolio "Global Kids" from the perspective of English as a Lingua Franca. This series of five books is dedicated to Bilingual Early Childhood Education in a prestigious language (English-Portuguese) to promote integration between language and content. It is grounded in the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) (Brasil, 2018) and the WIDA ELD Framework. El Kadri (2022) explains that each material is organized according to the social practices of children: Play (Nursery 1 and 2), Sing (Preschool), and Tell Stories (Pre-K 1 and Pre-K 2) (El Kadri, 2022). In this article, we study the portfolio and seek to analyze how the ELF perspective is materialized in the materials designed for Pre-K 1.

The Global Kids portfolio (El Kadri; Saviolli, 2022) was designed to guide the curricular practices of a public bilingual school whose function is to educate critical individuals with new ways of acting and interacting in the world (El Kadri; Saviolli; Molinari, forthcoming). It was developed in 2021 and implemented in the first public bilingual school in the state of Paraná, in the city of Ibiporã, coordinated by the first author of this article. The collection has as organizing principles the decolonial perspective, the perspective of interculturality as a tool to decolonize practices, and a heteroglossic view of language based on conceptualizations of the dynamic bilingual subject (García; Wei, 2014). The collection encompasses the knowledge areas and learning objectives of the BNCC (Brasil, 2018) and includes activities in both languages (Portuguese and English), aiming to value the student's repertoire. It is organized through thematic units and genres.

Thus, we analyze the portfolio based on the ELF perspective, specifically regarding the pedagogical implications for the classroom. We are interested in verifying the potential of the bilingual portfolio to destabilize colonial practices through the incorporation of ELF as a guiding principle. El Kadri and Gimenez (2013) pointed out the main implications of ELF, such as the decentralization of the native speaker through greater exposure of the learner to varieties, the incorporation of themes that are local and global, the presentation of culture dissociated from specific nations, the incorporation of critical perspectives, and working with production and reception skills as the focus of learning.

In the next section, we analyze and exemplify how these principles were materialized through the categories: a) local/global etc.; b) culture as discourse; c) inclusion of various linguistic varieties, and d) focus on reception (stories and songs) and production of texts.

1 Articulation of Local and Global Themes

We agree with Siqueira (2018) when he emphasizes that English teaching should be a space for the decolonization of hegemonic beliefs and practices (Siqueira, 2018). Thus, bilingual education, by using this language as a medium of instruction, from our perspective, should also incorporate critical awareness of the effects of globalization and the expansion of English in the world, legitimizing language learners and professionals who were previously considered subaltern intellectuals (Kumaravadivelu, 2016). In Global Kids (El Kadri; Saviolli, 2022), the decolonial perspective is materialized, for example, in the inclusion of diverse narratives, the choice of narratives from the Global South, anti-racist education, and a stance against the stereotyping of gender issues.

In the following table, we present the stories that organize the material for PRE-K (Pre-K 1), their authors, origins, and the main theme addressed:

Table 1 – Stories organizing the material for PRE-K (Pre-K 1), their authors, origins, and main theme addressed

STORYTELLING	AUTHOR	THEMES
The name Jar	Yangsook Choi	Cultural identity; first day of school; friendship.
The proudest blue: a story of Hijab and family	Ibtihaj Muhammad and S.K. Ali	Family; routine; cultural identity; diversity.
Sulwe	Lupita Nyong'o	Racism; self-esteem; attitudes.
Lara's black Dolls	Aparecida de Jesus Ferreira	Black identities; toys.
Just ask	Sonia Sotomayor	Differences that make us unique.
Tough guys have feelings too	Keith Negley	Emotions – toxic masculinity.
We are water protectors	Carole Lindstrom	Indigenous population; water preservation.
Mae among the stars	Roda Ahmed	Feminine empowerment – dreams.
The boy who grew a forest	Sophia Gholz	Individual empowerment – defending the forests.

Source: El Kadri (2022).

The table above allows us to demonstrate the multiplicity of discourses that circulate in this portfolio, which usually does not occur in the majority of educational materials. Traces of decoloniality can be found through the inclusion of narratives belonging to the Global South, such as authors from countries like Somalia, Kenya, Lebanon, Korea, and Brazil (El Kadri, 2022). It is also present through discourses that deviate from the norm of coloniality by bringing forth alternative possibilities of being and acting in the world beyond those determined by the Global North: the discourse of indigenous peoples (We are water protectors), the empowerment of femininity (Mae among the stars), the breaking of patterns of what it means to be a man, challenging the stigma that "men don't cry!" (Tough guys have feelings too), and the understanding of culture as identity discourses (The name Jar; The proudest blue: a story of Hijab and family), addressing diversity (Just ask), and racism (Sulwe; Lara's black dolls).

The inclusion of these discourses in educational materials is justified by the lack of attention to the intercultural and multicultural education of students. According to Megale (2022), there is often a mistaken notion that bilingual schools automatically promote multicultural education simply by using two languages as a medium of instruction. Megale (2022) argues that contrary to this belief, multicultural education is directly linked to systematic and intentional work that permeates all curriculum components with this goal in mind. Thus, we agree with Kramersch's (2006) definition presented by Megale (2022) of culture as "subjectivity and historicity, constructed and maintained by the stories we tell and the various discourses that give meaning to our lives" (Kramersch, 2011, p. 356 *apud* Megale, 2022, p. 63).

Therefore, Megale (2022) asserts, based on Walsh (2009), that through an intercultural perspective, it is possible to question "differences and historically woven inequalities in our society regarding sociocultural, ethnic-racial, gender, and sexual orientation relationships, among others" (Megale, 2022, p. 66). This notion is directly related to the decolonial question because, as Megale (2022) further explains, interculturality represents "a possibility to engage with the Other, that is, to highlight and value the meanings, knowledge, and subjects subalternized by coloniality"

(Megale, 2022, p. 64).

Like Megale (2022), we believe that "education has as its main objectives the construction of societies where differences are the central axis of democracy and the production of individuals capable of establishing equitable and fair relations" (Megale; Liberali, 2021 *apud* Megale, 2022, p. 65-66). For this reason, we advocate the need for curriculum development that questions hegemonic ideologies and encourages critical formation.

2 Culture as discourse

Similar to Candau (2008), we recognize the intrinsic relationship between education and culture and understand the school as a space of cultural production. Megale (2022) asserts that the school is "the territory in which identities and mentalities, even if temporarily, are (re)constructed in an incessant movement of cultural production and local re-signification of experiences woven globally over time" (Megale, 2022, p. 68-69).

Thus, we align once again with Candau (2008) on the need to reinvent school education to "offer meaningful and challenging spaces and times for teaching and learning in the current sociopolitical and cultural contexts and the concerns of children and young people" (Candau, 2008, p. 13). For this, we advocate for "curricula that question hegemonic ideologies and value other ways of being and existing in the world" (Megale, 2022, p. 65-66). We align with Megale (2022) in the idea that it is possible to build an intercultural bilingual education "through an additional language (and also the students' native language), [as this way] we can create opportunities for [students] to confront worldviews different from those circulating in their immediate communities." Thus, "the learner can expand their repertoire" (Megale, 2022, p. 67) and has the chance to "form a more active and informed view of the discourses that guide actions in their community" (Megale, 2022, p. 67).

This initiative is based on the principle of the intercultural perspective advocated by Candau (2008), who argues for the desire to "promote education for the recognition of the 'other,' for dialogue between different social and cultural groups. An education for cultural negotiation, addressing conflicts caused by power asymmetry between different sociocultural groups in our societies" (Candau, 2008, p. 23). In the Pre-K portfolio, for example, we can observe the materialization of different discourses through the various narratives brought by the portfolio. The storybooks selected for this educational material align with the variety of voices and perspectives advocated by El Kadri and Megale (2023). According to the authors, including voices that are usually not represented in educational materials constitutes a way to challenge colonial norms and offer alternative ways of being and acting in the world. Following this reasoning, we present our analyses of the discourses present in each book in the portfolio. The following table allows us to verify these discourses, such as the negotiation and valorization of cultural identity, appreciation of different cultures (of immigrants, of various religions), preservation of the environment by various peoples, female empowerment, breaking gender stereotypes, valorization of anti-racist discourse, black identities, social identities, self-esteem and representation, inclusion and appreciation of differences, and discourse that problematizes cultural assimilation in general and promotes self-affirmation.

Table 2 – Selection of books and authors for Global Kids Pre-K (El Kadri; Saviolli, 2022)

STORYTELLING	DISCOURSE
The name Jar	Negotiation of Korean cultural identity.
The proudest blue: a story of Hijab and family	Negotiation of Muslim cultural identity, cultural assimilation, and self-assertion.
Sulwe	Anti-racist discourse, black identities, social identities, self-esteem, and representativity.
Lara's black Dolls	Anti-racist discourse, black identities, social identities, self-esteem, and representativity.
Just ask	Inclusion, appreciation of differences.
Tough guys have feelings too	Breaking gender stereotypes, and expression of emotions.
We are water protectors	Negotiation and valorization of cultural identity, appreciation of indigenous culture, and environmental preservation.
Mae among the stars	Women's empowerment, breaking gender stereotypes.
The boy who grew a forest	Negotiation and valorization of cultural identity, appreciation of Indian culture, and environmental preservation.

Source: Adapted from El Kadri and Megale (2023).

In the books "The Name Jar" and "The Proudest Blue," it is possible to find the discourse of negotiation and valorization of cultural identities, specifically Korean and Muslim, respectively. Megale, El Kadri and Saviolli (2023) explain that both narratives address issues of cultural identities that are often not covered in educational materials, and by exposing students to these narratives, the aim is to promote the opportunity to recognize their own cultural identities, learn about others, and appreciate differences. With this, according to El Kadri and Megale (2023), based on Candau (2008), the goal is to unveil the cultural blindness that permeates everyday school life.

El Kadri, Saviolli and Santos (2022), in a specific analysis of anti-racist discourse, explain how the works "Sulwe" and "Lara's Black Dolls" were used to promote an anti-racist approach in bilingual early childhood education. According to the authors, anti-racist education fights for the "recognition and deconstruction of structural racism through the production of counter-discourses and counter-narratives that value black and indigenous peoples" (El Kadri; Saviolli; Santos, 2022, p. 112) and presents itself as "the mechanism against racism, as an instrument for the recognition and strengthening of racial identities" (El Kadri; Saviolli; Santos, 2022, p. 115). Thus, the activities proposed from these stories invite students "to reflect on the importance of respect and appreciation for the characteristics of their bodies and others" (El Kadri; Saviolli; Santos, 2022, p. 118) and aim to promote equality, appreciation of racial diversity in the school context, awareness of racism, and promotion of black representation (El Kadri; Saviolli; Santos, 2022).

In the book "Just Ask," the author, inspired by her diagnosis of diabetes in childhood, writes about the challenges that children can face and also about their superpowers. In this way, the story celebrates diversity and brings with it encouragement for inclusion and respect for differences in ways of acting and existing in the world. On the other hand, the stories "Tough Guys Have Feelings Too" and "Mae Among the Stars" bring with them the discourses of breaking gender stereotypes, specifically addressing the demonstration of feelings traditionally reprimanded in boys' education with the classic phrase "boys don't cry!" The second addresses the issue of

female empowerment, sharing the lesson that girls can be whatever they want and encouraging them to pursue their dreams. According to El Kadri, Saviolli and Molinari (2022), these stories present empowering discourses that question gender stereotypes and confront social structures perpetuated by colonial influences, and their use in bilingual early childhood education results in the possibility of diverse expressions of identities.

Furthermore, the stories "We Are Water Protectors" and "The Boy Who Grew a Forest" focus on indigenous characters and marginalized populations. According to El Kadri, Saviolli and Molinari (in press), these works present new ways of being and acting in the world and distance themselves from representations of minority cultures, here being indigenous and Indian populations. Both stories address the negotiation and valorization of cultural identity, valuing indigenous and Indian cultures, respectively, and the preservation of nature. According to El Kadri and Megale (2023), these books bring the opportunity to discuss our relationship with the environment, recognize the differences that shape us, and question our traditional ways of existing, creating, and acting in the world. Specifically, El Kadri and Megale (2023) explain that these materials allow the integration of content and language, the appreciation of students' linguistic repertoire, the promotion of connections between the two studied languages, and contact with non-hegemonic narratives and identities. In this way, all the stories chosen to compose this material contribute, each in their own way, to the formation of critical bilingual citizens, aware of the diversity of narratives, identities, and ways of acting and being in the world.

3 Linguistic Varieties

Considering the need to broaden the range of linguistic varieties studied in the classroom as one of the pedagogical implications of the ELF perspective (Calvo et al., 2022; Gimenez, 2009), the analyzed teaching material includes the use of read-aloud, which involves QR codes provided in the books directing students to videos on YouTube. In these videos, speakers from different locations (mostly the authors themselves) with diverse linguistic backgrounds read the stories included in the material.

Thus, students are encouraged to become acquainted with different accents and linguistic varieties, providing them with the opportunity to familiarize themselves with these linguistic aspects from a young age. This contributes to an empowered bilingual identity formation, marked by the notion that it is possible to appropriate another language and use it according to one's desires and needs without adhering strictly to the patterns of native speakers.

Below, you can observe Table 3, which presents the selected stories for the material along with their respective authors, origins, and links for the mentioned read-aloud videos.

Table 3 – List of stories, authors, and links for read-aloud videos

STORYTELLING	LINKS	ENGLISHES
The name Jar	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bGCuOEoEXSc	Korean
The proudest blue: a story of Hijab and family	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLFzDfVuWUA	Lebanese
Sulwe	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBU5ahKUQ8U	Kenyan-Mexican
Lara's black dolls	read aloud not available	Brazilian
Just ask	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4sGcaA6bFk	Hispanic American
Tough guys have feelings too	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8LhX5Rb2fY	American
We are water protectors	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kEcEnrydoa4	American
Mae among the stars	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3A8IiU62oV4	Somali
The boy who grew a forest	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XoMXeo7E8xk	American

Source: Developed by the authors.

Therefore, exposure to various "Englishes" aligns with the implications of the ELF perspective in English language teaching as outlined by El Kadri and Gimenez (2013). These implications include the decentralization of the native speaker through an increased exploration of language varieties in the classroom, the incorporation of local and global themes, the dissociation between cultures and nations, the inclusion of critical perspectives, and the development of communicative and comprehension skills.

4 Language as Social Practices

According to the most recent version of the BNCC, language should be conceived as a social practice to ensure opportunities for students to act creatively and as protagonists during their learning process (Brasil, 2018). In this sense, students are encouraged to create oral and written texts appropriate for their age group with increased use of linguistic resources as they become familiar with the language, thus promoting the authentic, creative, and autonomous use of language (Brasil, 2018).

This conception also aligns with the communicative purpose inherent in the ELF perspective, as in this view, the focus of language teaching and learning is shifted from grammatical structures to communicative purposes (Calvo *et al.*, 2022; El Kadri, 2010; Gimenez, 2009).

Aligning with the conception of language as a social practice and the communicative purpose of the ELF perspective, the portfolio materializes the concept of language as a social practice in two ways: by being organized based on children's social practices and through the "Social Practice" section at the end of each unit.

Regarding its organization, all proposals start from the social practices of children: playing, singing, and storytelling. Although these genres permeate the entire material proposal, it is

relevant to mention that they determine the taught contents, as they are the organizers of the proposal. Thus, through genres suitable for children's age, "playing (for Nursery I and II), singing (for Maternal), listening, and storytelling (Pre-I and Pre-II)" (El Kadri, 2022, p. 160).

The section titled "Social Practice" at the end of each unit, where students must perform social practice based on what they learned, provides an opportunity for students to exercise agency in their learning and act creatively. In the table below, we illustrate some examples of the social practices proposed in the Pre-K portfolio:

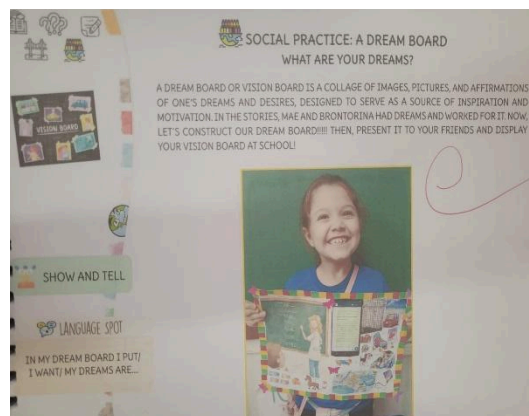
Table 4 - Examples of proposed social practices

STORYTELLING	SOCIAL PRACTICE: PRODUCTION
The name Jar	Pre-K digital book name
The proudest blue: a story of Hijab and family	A video-choir
Sulwe Lara's black dolls	Self-portrait cord
Just ask	Growing a garden
Tough guys have feelings too	Superhero Parade day!
We are water protectors	A demonstration: We stand for....
Mae among the stars	A dream Board
The boy who grew a forest	Recycle day

Source: El Kadri (2022).

The table demonstrates how students are positioned as protagonists, performing and using the language to engage in social practices. The focus is not only on teaching the English language but teaching through the language, allowing students to develop oral and written expression skills, as suggested by Gimenez (2009) as another implication of the ELF perspective. By performing through the language, the material enables students to act creatively and be agents during their English language learning process. The image below exemplifies one of these social practices, where students build and present their Dream Board after all the work and problematization of female empowerment through the work "Mae among the stars."

Figura 1 - Dream Board - *Global Kids* Portfolio



Fonte: El Kadri; Saviolli (2022)

IN CONCLUSION

In this article, we have demonstrated how the *Global Kids* portfolio was constructed to resist colonial attitudes that traditionally permeate English teaching, as the entire discipline in the school curriculum has been built based on principles developed during and by global colonization, which helps perpetuate Eurocentric and colonial values. Thus, we present the material as an attempt to resist the colonialism that prevails in the teaching of this language, thinking of ways to deconstruct and empower bi/multilingual speakers who can (and do!) use this language to their advantage (Rajagopalan, 2004).

Here we analyzed the material developed for Pre-K and concluded that, by including stories originating from the Global South, the material is composed of discourses that value differences, female empowerment, gender stereotype breaking, identity negotiation, cultural appreciation, inclusion, and environmental preservation. Thus, the material presents narratives that depict different ways of being and acting in the world and stimulate notions of inclusion and respect for others.

Through diverse narratives, the selected stories also present different varieties of English language use (Brazilian, Somali, Kenyan-Mexican, Korean, etc.). This collection of different accents and linguistic-cultural backgrounds serves as a way to broaden the range of varieties studied in the classroom and reduce the emphasis on the native speaker, as mentioned by Gimenez (2009) as one of the implications of including the ELF perspective for language teaching and as an emphasis on content and multilingualism, as similarly proposed by Calvo *et al.* (2022).

Furthermore, the material aligns with the conception of language as a social practice presented in the most recent edition of the BNCC and provides opportunities for students to interact with the language and act creatively and as agents during their learning process (Brasil, 2018). In addition, the material also directs the focus to the development of communicative competence rather than grammatical precision, as often occurs in English language teaching (Calvo *et al.*, 2022; El Kadri, 2010; Gimenez, 2009).

Therefore, the portfolio blends the teaching and learning of two languages (Portuguese and English) and encourages practices for students to learn through the English language. From the selection of stories that make up this material, children are exposed to diverse narratives that go beyond the Eurocentric core and present different conceptions of identities and cultures, promoting the articulation between local and global themes (Gimenez, 2009), the development of communicative skills (Calvo *et al.*, 2022; El Kadri, 2010; Gimenez, 2009), and stimulates the

agency of the student during their learning process, thus acting in the construction of planetary citizenship (Gimenez, 2009).

In conclusion, the Global Kids portfolio presents a "made in Brazil" (Duboc, 2009) proposal for integrating content and language teaching in Bilingual Early Childhood Education through the pedagogical implications of the ELF perspective. This perspective, in our view, is important because it has the potential to decolonize imperialist practices commonly found in bilingual contexts that almost exclusively focus on practices and discourses from the Global North and with great submission to the ideology of the native speaker.

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