



Social representations of national languages in primary education at a school in Sumbe

Representações sociais das línguas nacionais no ensino primário numa escola do Sumbe

Representaciones sociales de las lenguas nacionales en la educación primaria en una escuela de Sumbe

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Abstract:

The present article undertakes a study on the social representations of national languages within Primary Education, given that this subsystem is regarded as one of paramount importance. The investigative methods employed both theoretical and empirical enable the collection of information concerning the conceptions of various authors. Today, no language remains free from the influence of another, a consequence of the ease with which human beings interact. One of the outcomes of such interaction lies in the influence exerted by one language upon another, a phenomenon that generally manifests through the interference of an individual's mother tongue (MT) in the acquisition of a second language. The objective of this study is to identify the social representations of national languages held by sixth-grade students in a Primary School in Sumbe. The findings suggest that students demonstrate both a lack of knowledge and limited mastery of the National Languages. This is attributed to the fact that they neither learn them from their guardians who do not teach or use the NLs in daily life nor perceive them as accessible. Furthermore, some students consider the National Languages difficult to learn, which generates disinterest and constrains the stimulation of motivation and engagement among many learners. Therefore, National Languages are significant not only as vehicles of communication but also as essential elements of the identity of any people within the broader cultural matrix.

Keywords:

Social Representations; National Languages; Teaching-Learning Process.

Resumo:

O presente artigo que nos propusemos trata de um estudo sobre representações sociais das línguas nacionais no Ensino Primária, por se considerar um subsistema de extrema importância. Os métodos investigativos do nível teórico e empíricos empregados permitem, obter informações a respeito das concepções de diferentes autores sobre Hoje, nenhuma língua está livre de influências de outra língua; fruto da facilidade com que os homens interagem. Uma das consequências desta interação reside na influência da língua de uns sobre a de outros, o que geralmente ocorre com interferência da língua materna (LM) do indivíduo na sua segunda língua. Tem como objectivo identificar as representações sociais sobre as línguas nacionais que possuem os alunos da 6ª Classe numa Escola Primária do Sumbe. Pelo que se concebem é que os alunos revelam desconhecimento e domínio das Línguas Nacionais e que não aprende com os encarregados porque não os ensinam ou não usa a LN no seu dia-a-dia, por outra é o facto

de que alguns alunos considerarem as LN de difíceis de os aprender provocando desinteresse e limitações na estimulação do interesse e da motivação de muitos alunos, por tanto as Línguas Nacionais são elementos importantes não só como veículo de comunicação mas também como um dos elementos da identidade de qualquer povo dentro da matriz cultural.

Palavras-chave:

Representações sociais; Línguas Nacionais; Processo de ensino-aprendizagem.

Resumen:

El presente artículo se propone realizar un estudio sobre las representaciones sociales de las lenguas nacionales en la Educación Primaria, dado que este subsistema se considera de suma importancia. Los métodos investigativos empleados —tanto de nivel teórico como empírico— permiten obtener información acerca de las concepciones de distintos autores. En la actualidad, ninguna lengua está libre de la influencia de otra, fruto de la facilidad con que los seres humanos interactúan. Una de las consecuencias de esta interacción reside en la influencia de una lengua sobre otra, lo que generalmente ocurre mediante la interferencia de la lengua materna (LM) del individuo en su segunda lengua. El objetivo de este estudio es identificar las representaciones sociales sobre las lenguas nacionales que poseen los alumnos de sexto grado en una Escuela Primaria de Sumbe. Los resultados sugieren que los estudiantes revelan desconocimiento y escaso dominio de las Lenguas Nacionales, lo cual se debe a que no las aprenden de sus tutores quienes no las enseñan ni las utilizan en la vida cotidiana y, además, a que algunos alumnos consideran las Lenguas Nacionales difíciles de aprender, lo que provoca desinterés y limita la estimulación del interés y la motivación de muchos estudiantes. Por lo tanto, las Lenguas Nacionales constituyen elementos fundamentales no solo como vehículos de comunicación, sino también como componentes esenciales de la identidad de cualquier pueblo dentro de la matriz cultural.

Palabras clave:

Representaciones sociales; Lenguas Nacionales; Proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

INTRODUCTION

In rural areas, due to the limited use of the Portuguese language, knowledge of it is not very significant. During the colonial period, Angolan language policy served the repressive regime, so the use and teaching of national languages in schools were never put into practice. Children encountered a strange reality at school, integrating themselves through a European language completely different from their mother tongue.

In 1845, Portuguese was proclaimed the official language of Angola, and the use of indigenous languages, referred to as "dog languages," was prohibited, with the exception of catechism (Hlibowicka-Węglarz 2003). The teaching of Portuguese never took into account the national languages spoken by the students. Even so, Portuguese failed to establish itself throughout the entire country due to the resistance offered by the Angolan people.

Angola is a multilingual country where a significant portion of its inhabitants are at least bilingual, speaking their native Bantu or Khoisan language and Portuguese. The most widely used national languages are: Kikongo (in the provinces of Cabinda, Zaire and Uige), Kimbundu (in the Mdundu region which includes the areas of Luanda, Malanje, Bengo and Cuanza-Norte) and Umbundu (Cuanza-Sul, Benguela, Bié, Huambo and the northern part of Huíla) (Lourenço, 1992).

According to studies by Fonseca (2008), it is observed that in Angola approximately 42% of children under 9 years old have Portuguese as their national language; 34% of those aged between 10 and 19 years old who live in urban areas have Portuguese as their first language; 18% of those aged between 20 and 29 years old have Portuguese as their first language , and 10% of those over 40 years of age have the national language as their language of daily interaction. Thus, it is common to observe that The young people of Sumbe show little command of the native languages of the province.

According to UNESCO's definition, an official language is the language used in the context of the various official activities : legislative, executive and judicial, of a sovereign state or territory. It is the language enshrined in law (through the constitution or ordinary law), or simply by custom, of a country, state or other territory as the language adopted in that country, state or territory (Abranches, 2005).

Given the immense importance of national languages in the life of a society, it is observed that 6th grade students in one of the primary schools in Sumbe have little or no social understanding of national languages. Despite the diversity of national languages spoken in Sumbe , it is noticeable that the students at the school under study rarely , if ever, interact using the various linguistic variants present in the province.

Therefore, the following general objective was established : To identify the social representations of national languages held by 6th grade students in a primary school in Sumbe .

The proposed theme is current and relevant; therefore, we believe it is important to value them , as they play an important role in society by contributing to the country's development in all aspects. They serve as a foundation for a community's knowledge and as a link between culture and its people.

Africa, and Angola in particular, wishes to prepare its citizens well for the challenges and realities of the 21st century. It must take into account cultural and linguistic diversity as important phenomena, since national languages are important elements not only as a means of

communication but also as one of the elements of the identity of any people within the cultural matrix.

SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS

Moscovici's theory had several antecedents, most notably the collective representations of Emile Durkheim . According to Moscovici (1978), the concept of social representation originates in Sociology and Anthropology, through Durkheim and Lévi- Bruhl . Piaget's theory of children's representations and Vygotsky 's theory of cultural development also contributed to the creation of the theory of social representations . We will present some of these below.

Collective representations referred to a set of knowledge and beliefs (myths, religion, science) that, according to Jodelet (1984), is a set currently recognized by social psychologists to designate multiple phenomena that are observed and studied at varying levels of complexity, both individual and collective , psychological and social.

It was the French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1898) who, from within sociology, proposed the concept of collective representation . This sociologist theorized that the basic categories of thought originate in society, and that knowledge can only be found in social experience; that is, social life is the condition for all organized thought and vice versa.

Social representations are, according to Diose (1989), generating principles of stances (p. 85) that regulate social interactions and are elaborated through and in communication relations (p. 228).

This means that social representations not only reflect reality, but also produce concrete effects on how subjects interpret situations, position themselves in relation to problems, and interact with others. They function as guides to action, allowing individuals to make decisions and adopt attitudes consistent with the meanings shared within their social group.

Thus, Diose reinforces the idea that social representations are instruments of symbolic mediation , elaborated and transformed continuously in communicative practices. This perspective is close to Serge Moscovici's theory, highlighting that socially constructed knowledge guides both the understanding of reality and the practical action of individuals.

On the other hand, for Hewstone (1989), social representations present themselves as a kind of practical theories of common sense, automatic explanations that escape any scientific research or analysis (p. 261).

This means that social representations should not be understood as rigorous scientific constructs, but as forms of everyday knowledge that function as "practical theories" elaborated

by common sense. By stating that social representations present themselves as a kind of practical theory of common sense, automatic explanations that escape any scientific research or analysis, the author emphasizes that these representations fulfill a pragmatic function, offering quick and accessible answers to the needs of interpreting reality.

These automatic explanations allow individuals and social groups to understand complex phenomena without resorting to formal scientific methods. Instead of seeking empirical validation, social representations operate as symbolic frames of reference, **guiding attitudes, behaviors, and social interactions. In this sense, Hewstone highlights the** spontaneous and functional nature of social representations, which emerge from communication and daily life, serving as mediating instruments between the individual and the collective.

His analysis is close to the perspective of Serge Moscovici, who also emphasizes that social representations are not merely reflections of reality, but active systems of interpretation that structure social and cultural practices. Hewstone, however, reinforces the idea that these representations are distinguished from scientific knowledge precisely by their practical and immediate nature.

According to Sá (1995), the difference between social representation, created by Moscovici, and Durkheim's collective representation lies in the fact that:

Durkheimian sociology, collective representations were seen as given, as absolute explanatory entities, irreducible by any subsequent analysis, and not as phenomena that should be explained by themselves. Social psychology, on the contrary, according to Moscovici, would have to penetrate the representations to discover their structure and internal mechanisms" (p. 23).

collective representations to be expressions of collective consciousness, endowed with normative and coercive force. They were not seen as phenomena to be broken down into internal mechanisms, but as structures that explained the social order. Therefore, in his approach, the focus was on how these representations supported institutions, values, and social practices, functioning as pillars of social cohesion.

According to Spinassé (2006), the Mother Tongue or First Language is not necessarily the mother's language, nor the first language one learns; it is not just one language. However, it is the one learned first, through the parents, and it is also frequently the language of the community, and the parents' language may not be the language of the community. By learning both, the individual comes to have more than one first language. A child can, therefore, acquire a language that is not spoken at home, and both are considered first languages.



With this concept, the following example can be extracted, adapted from Spinassé (2006):

“ A child is born and raised in Angola, the child of an American father and a Cuban mother. If the child communicates with each parent in their respective languages, and Portuguese is the everyday language at school and with friends, then this child clearly has three mother tongues: Portuguese, English, and Spanish.”

It should be noted that the characterization of a Mother Tongue as such occurs when several factors are combined and all of them are taken into consideration: the language of the mother, the father, the community, the language acquired first by the child, which may not be from their parents. These elements contribute to defining a First Language.

One's mother tongue is taught because learning it triggers cognitive processes, facilitates the learning of foreign languages, fosters self-knowledge, broadens knowledge of the world, facilitates relationships with others, allows access to information and culture, and enables social and professional success.

National languages in the teaching-learning process

The education system in Angola has gone through many phases from colonization to the present day. With Angola's independence in 1975, there was a need to reorganize education in the country, taking into account the new needs for training national teachers who could support and revitalize education in accordance with the nation's new aspirations.

In these terms, the Constitution of the Republic of Angola of 2010 in article 19 (Languages);

Point 2 mentions that the State values and promotes the study, teaching, and use of other Angolan languages, as well as the main languages of international communication. In turn, Article 21 (Fundamental Tasks of the State), in paragraph n), states that it is the State's task to protect, value, and dignify Angolan languages of African origin as cultural heritage, and to promote their development as languages of national identity and communication.

However, we can state that, in the case of Angola, as Castro (1978) says, the education of African populations until the 18th century was left entirely to religious missions, with the Catholic missions (90%) being paid for by the Portuguese government; the Protestant missions received no subsidy. This education is essentially characterized by the role imposed on it by

official directives : to make the African a "Portuguese," leading him to forget all the literary and artistic traditions of the Angolan peoples, their history, etc.

Several African countries with a sociolinguistic situation similar to that of Angola have opted for the bilingual education method, since monolingual education has demonstrated shortcomings, requiring a reorientation of school programs and their content (Reis, 2006).

multilingual situation in Angola, where children with Portuguese as their mother tongue coexist with children whose mother tongues are national languages, the non-application of functional bilingualism implies the continuation of the current problem of failure in language teaching.

According to Maurice and Reis (2006, pp. 87-88):

“It will be essential to distinguish between teaching Portuguese as a first language and teaching Portuguese as a second and foreign language. In the first case, a direct methodology will be used , since learning takes place through a natural process, in the interaction with people who speak this language. In the second case, taking into account the status of Portuguese as an official language , an African-European school bilingualism will be developed.”

According to Diarra and Reis (2006), for the proper implementation of functional bilingualism, the convergent method will be adopted, which consists of parallel learning of national languages and a second language in order to achieve functional bilingualism. The aforementioned author also emphasizes that this method has proven itself in many African countries characterized by multilingualism, especially in Mali. On the other hand, it is considered that the best way to acquire communicative competence is to place the learner in varied situations, leading them to speak, that is, to the effective practice of the second language. (pp. 27-88).

Article 16 of the Basic Law of the Education System in Angola establishes Portuguese as the official language of instruction, but recognizes and values the importance of national languages as an integral part of the educational process. The law foresees their gradual introduction into the different subsystems, especially primary and community education, with the aim of promoting bilingualism and strengthening Angolan cultural identity. However, its lack of practical implementation reveals a contradiction between legal discourse and school reality.

Although the law provides for the gradual introduction of national languages, the education system continues to exclusively privilege Portuguese as the language of instruction. This situation generates significant pedagogical challenges, especially in rural areas, where

many children begin schooling without mastering the official language. The result is a language barrier that compromises learning and perpetuates social inequalities.

The absence of consistent policies for training bilingual teachers, the scarcity of teaching materials in national languages, and the lack of investment in cultural appreciation programs explain the gap between the norm and practice. Furthermore, the persistence of a Eurocentric view of the role of Portuguese as a unifying national language contributes to marginalizing local languages, relegating them to the domestic and community sphere.

From a critical point of view, the non-implementation of Article 16 weakens the objective of preserving Angolan cultural identity and promoting inclusive education. The law, by not being applied, becomes a symbolic rather than practical device, serving as a normative reference without real impact on school life. Angolan educational policies do not guarantee the teaching of Angolan languages, as can be seen in Article 16 of the aforementioned law, described below:

1. The instruction must be given in Portuguese .
2. The State promotes and ensures the human, scientific-technical, material and financial conditions for the expansion and generalization of the use in education of other Angolan languages, as well as sign language for individuals with hearing impairments.
3. Other languages of Angola may be used in the different education subsystems, under the terms to be regulated in a separate decree.
4. The State promotes public policies for the inclusion and widespread teaching of the main languages of international communication in all education subsystems, with priority given to the teaching of English and French.

It can be inferred from this article that the legislators disregarded the technical nature and multilingual reality of Angola. Therefore, the treatment that the law establishes regarding the teaching of Angolan languages does not respond to sociolinguistic theories (Pinto, 2010).

Armando (2014) describes the interview he accessed via the Internet, given by Augusto Nunes on 08/11/2010, regarding the status of national languages in Angola, in which he stated the following: The practice of children learning more than one language and the promotion of teaching in national languages, with a simultaneity of these two types of languages, is pointed out as the most likely path to school success (p. 118).

When asked to give his point of view on the linguistic issues in Angola, which have been the subject of various arguments and even controversies within social, political, academic and other spheres, Augusto Nunes replied, "Oh, what a mess!" twala "nayu (It is the problem that exists) and that sooner or later we will solve it." (Armando, 2014).

In light of the above, it is unbelievable to accept that, after more than 10 years and with some existing documentation pointed out by Augusto Nunes, nothing is being done for the development of national languages, now Angolan languages (Armando, 2014).

Therefore, the status of Angolan languages is understood as the legal framework or the juridical relevance they should occupy in the national sphere, within the framework of the State's educational policies.

National languages in the national education system.

The history of pre-colonial Angola, which we revisit through the social sciences and humanities (archaeology, anthropology, history, linguistics), records facts that certify the existence of writing used by ancestral civilizations. Since writing is "a graphic representation of language, a way of preserving discourse, and, as such, is a secondary instrument of communication" (Calvet, 1999, p. 218), these vestiges are currently found within the scope of scientific research and in contributions resulting from the collection and study of oral tradition sources.

In this context, the written word aims to embody the oral language that occupies the primary place in the human communication system. According to Fiorin and Petter (2008), in the cultures of sub-Saharan Africa, the word is endowed with vital energy, has the power to manipulate forces, is a source of knowledge, and should be valued and handled with prudence.

The first difficulty encountered in the 1977 reform forum was the realization that the national languages lacked a scientific reformulation. To remedy this problem, the INL was created in 1978, the predecessor of the current ILNA. This body, subordinate to the Ministry of Culture, was tasked with developing and expanding the scientific study of a range of national languages, namely Chokwe , Kikongo , Kimbundu, Ngangela , Oshikwanyama and Umbundu (p.189).

The project aimed to carry out the standardization and grammatical description of these native languages, in the domains of lexicon, phonetics, phonology, morphosyntax, and semantics. The main objective was to serve as a basis for the development of pedagogical resources necessary to facilitate the introduction of these languages into the regular education and teaching subsystem, starting with primary education institutions, and potentially also encompassing higher education and teacher training (Marques, 2007, p. 608).

Faced with this scenario, projects and programs were developed to reverse this situation as quickly as possible. One of the first measures consisted of introducing the LN (National

Languages) into the education system, both for academic improvement and for adult literacy, since the majority were illiterate and did not master Portuguese. The intention was to massify this process throughout the national territory. However, a dilemma arose regarding the feasibility of the guidelines.

The fact was evidently related to the complexity inherent in the absence of pedagogical instruments to support national languages, that is, there were no scientific tools or didactic resources for the exercise of teaching and learning activities in the regular education system, although there were some sporadic interventions on and in teaching, mainly of a theological nature, certainly not encompassing the entire linguistic universe of the country (INL, 1980, p.23).

The process of introducing national languages into the National Education System in Angola was initially adapted, as an experiment, to two education subsystems: the literacy subsystem and the adult education subsystem. The results of this experiment were positive, considering the reduction in the illiteracy rate that was prevalent among communities speaking Angolan languages other than Portuguese. Thus, following the 2004 education reform, the State's responsibility shifted to creating conditions to develop programs that would accommodate these national languages also within the regular education subsystem, based on the results obtained in the previous action (Niamey 1978).

Following this same line of analysis, approximately twenty-three years after the first educational reform, in 2004, the second reform of the education system was carried out, which, through Law No. 13/01 of December 31, created the Framework Law of the Education System. Thus, the necessary means were in place for the introduction of the Framework Law into the National Education and Teaching System, starting in 2011.

The main reasons for introducing national languages into education, as mentioned by Zau (2019), include the following, among others:

1. High failure rates in primary school due to a lack of necessary linguistic competence in the European languages of instruction;
2. Advances achieved by linguistics, with regard to the systems of language functioning, which, on a theoretical level, have overcome difficulties considered, until very recently, insurmountable;
3. Progress achieved by psychology, which highlighted the paramount importance of the mother tongue in the psychomotor, affective, moral, and cognitive development of the child;

4. It is imperative to pedagogically organize teaching and training programs in accordance with the cultural, linguistic, and human realities of Africa.

Linguistic situation in Cuanza-Sul

Cupata (2014), Kwanza-Sul presents a great diversity of peoples with different ethnolinguistic characteristics, resulting from the fusion of various linguistic groups of Bantu origin. Some of these, in their eagerness to reach certain locations that are now Angola, left their influence on language, habits, and customs. "As far as can be ascertained from tradition and history, the migrant peoples of the District would be Ba- Xicongo , Gingas (or Jagas ?), Bailundos , and Ganguelas" (p. 125). Thus, based on Magalhães (1924), cited by Cupata (2014, p. 125), the influence of these peoples in some regions is mentioned, namely:

The Ba- Xicongo , we can find their influence in the Libolo area . Product of the intermingling of the primitive inhabitants with Ba- Xicongo .

The Gingas, whose influence manifested itself from their invasion, which would have taken place . After crossing the Cuanza under the command of Casembe-Cazúa , they subjugated the regions of Hoco and Quissongo . Subsequently, having advanced to Catumbi, they founded a new state there and, in successive raids, they extended their dominion eastward, to Cariango , and westward, from Dala- Cachibo to Tunda (Magalhães, 1924).

The Bailundos or Ba-Lundu occupied the largest extent of the southern regions of this District, areas of Chingue , Sanga, and Cassongue , also contributing to the formation of part of the peoples of Amboiva , Cela, Quissongo , Mussende , and perhaps Novo Redondo.

The Ganguelas, whose influence is felt among the Ambois , are believed to have come from the south along the Cuanza River, settling peacefully in the Amboim region .

From an ethnolinguistic point of view, Kwanza-Sul is composed of two large linguistic groups: the Ambundu (Kimbundo) in the North and the Ovimbundu (Umbundu) in the South. According to Cupata (2014), despite this distribution (Ambundu in the North and Ovimbundu in the South), both have spread throughout the province, making it difficult to distinguish each ethnic group. He bases his idea on the Government of the District of Cuanza-Sul (1970), which states, "In effect, the miscegenation between the Bambalas , Jingas, Bailundos and Ganguelas gave rise to the formation of new ethnic groups, whose current classification is based more on linguistic and geographical elements than on ethnic characteristics" (as cited by Cupata , 2014, p. 125).

The Lubolos or Libolos , the Quissamas , the Kibalas , the Hacos , and the Sendes or Mussendes are part of the Ambundu group .

The Sendes or Mussendes are located in the northwest of the province, occupying the left bank of the Cuanza River; they can be found in Mussende .

The Hacos , located in the Gango area , in the extreme east of the District and bordered by Quibala , Libolo , Pungo-Andongo , Malanje, Songo, Andulo and Bailundo (Magalhães, 1924, cited by Cupata , 2014, p.125). Specifically, we can find them in Quibala , Libolo and Mussende .

The Kibalas are located between the Lónhi , Longa and Nhia rivers , bordering the Libolos to the North, the Hacos to the West, the Umbundos to the South and the Ambois to the East (Viana, et al., 2001, cited by Cupata , 2014, p.125). They are found in Kibala , in a part of Ebo and Cela.

The Quissamas are located on the left bank of the Longa River; they can be found in Porto -Amboim and part of Kibala .

The Libolos are located in the municipalities of Libolo and Kibala .

Ovimbundu group includes the Mupindas or Mussumbes , the Ambois , the Musseles , and the Umbundos or Bailundos .

The Mupindas or Mussumbes can be found along the entire coastal strip from the mouth of the Keve River and its banks to the Tapado River. They inhabit the municipalities of Porto-Amboim and Sumbe .

The Ambois are located in the municipalities of Amboim , Porto- Amboim , Kilenda and Ebo .

The Umbundu or Bailundo people are distributed among the municipalities of Cassongue , Cela, Seles, and Ebo .

The linguistic situation in Cuanza-Sul presents a great diversity of ethnic groups, notably the Kimbundu and Umbundu, which, according to António (2019), makes the province a region of transition and cultural contact, as it hosts the confluence and encounter between two major Angolan peoples, the Kimbundu and the Ovimbundu , located in the interior of Angola and the only non-cross-border groups. What is actually observed is not only the encounter between two peoples, but above all a meeting, an encounter, a crossing between two great cultures. Each people brought its cultural heritage (values, symbols , myths, habits and customs, traditions, etc.).



Results of the survey of 6th grade students

1. Where are your parents from?

This was a question posed to the respondents. Regarding the question seeking to know where their parents are from, we found from the responses the presence of 5 provinces, with Uíge and Luanda with 6 each, making up 17%, Benguela and Huambo with 9 each, making up 25%, and the remaining 20, making up 57%, belonging to various municipalities in the province of Cuanza-Sul, with particular emphasis on the municipality of Sumbe .

2. Do they speak a national language or variant thereof?

Of the 35 students surveyed, which is 100%, 22 (62%) said that their parents do speak the National Language, while 13 students (37%) said that their parents do not speak the National Language.

As we can see, most of the parents and guardians of our respondents speak some National Language, but the same is not true for their children, demonstrating a lack of willingness and lack of communication between parents and their children in the National Language. Houdebine (2008) points out that every re-encounter of a speaker with their own speech, with their language, is difficult, insecure and filled with guilt (pp. 17-19).

3- In what languages do your grandparents interact with you?

Student: "Our students unanimously stated that some of their grandparents interact with them in their native language, and some grandparents also use Portuguese to better interact with their grandchildren."

Our respondents demonstrated a poor command of the National Language, as they are unable to hold a conversation using it, highlighting the existing disconnect regarding the appreciation and preservation of our languages.

4. Check the National Languages that you know?



Of the 35 students interviewed, representing 100%, 18 students (51%) said they know the Kikongo language, 32 students (91%) said they know the Kimbundu language, 32 students (91%) said they know the Umbundu language, 6 students (17%) said they know the Nhaneca language, 13 students (37%) said they know the Ganguela language, 10 students (28%) said they know the Chiokwe language, and 10 students (28%) said they know the Fiote language.

5. What variants or languages are spoken in the Cuanza-Sul Province?

Student: "The students surveyed demonstrated a weak knowledge of the spoken variants, mentioning only Kimbundu and Umbundu as the only National Languages spoken in their Province."

Cuanza-Sul constitutes a cultural mosaic, but due to a lack of appreciation for these languages by parents who limit themselves to not teaching them to their children, our respondents are limited to mentioning only these languages.

Although studies have aimed to strengthen the role played by native languages, significant challenges still face linguistic communities. This issue is entirely linked to the repercussions of colonial language policy regarding native languages, a time when they were subjected to exclusion and prohibited from being disseminated. Therefore, the effort being made to reverse this prevailing situation is to develop a bilingual education system program that aims to bring native languages into the context of scientific knowledge.

6. Do you speak any national languages?

Of the 35 students, which totals 100%, 9, representing 25.7%, said yes, and 26, representing 74%, said no.

We know that languages are instruments of communication, socialization, and administration of a state's affairs, and that mother tongues represent the cultural identity of its people.

7. Would you like to learn a national language?

Students: "The students unanimously stated that yes, they would like to learn a national language."

All linguistic communities have the right to an education that enables all their members to acquire a perfect knowledge of their own language, with the various skills relating to all areas of habitual language use, as well as the best possible knowledge of any other language they wish to learn. (UNESCO, 1996)

8. Which language do you find easiest?

Students: "The students interviewed consider the languages to be English, French, Portuguese, and Kimbundu to be easy."

Despite being foreign languages, the students mentioned Portuguese as the third most common language. English is considered the easiest, followed by French.

Given the responses from our respondents, the linguistic representation related to ease of use may be linked to the level of knowledge that the subjects have regarding these languages.

CONCLUSIONS

The theoretical foundations regarding social representations of National Languages affirm that the appreciation of Angolan languages is conceived as a powerful factor in de-alienation, in liberation through a renewed self-confidence that colonialism had taken away from us since the earliest classes.

Language is a vehicle for transmitting information and culture of a people; it is through language that people share experiences and express their feelings. There is no people without language and no language without people; hence the fundamental need for different nations to seek to preserve and persuade their populations to cultivate the spirit of preserving national languages, as it is part of a nation's identity.

It appears that students demonstrate a lack of knowledge and mastery of the National Languages, failing to learn them from their guardians because they are not taught or do not use the National Language in their daily lives. Furthermore, some students consider the National Languages difficult to learn, leading to disinterest and limitations in stimulating interest and motivation. Therefore, National Languages are important elements not only as a means of communication but also as an element of any people's identity within their cultural matrix. In terms of curricular guidelines, the teaching of National Languages in urban areas at the primary level should be implemented as quickly as possible. In this context, Portuguese would be a subject, not the sole means of knowledge transmission.



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