RCMOS – Revista Científica Multidisciplinar O Saber.
ISSN: 2675-9128. São Paulo - SP.
Year VII, v.1 2026 | Submission: 06/20/2026 | Accepted: 06/23/2026 | Publication: 06/26/2026

Intercultural Communication in Military Police Activity: Contributions of the Spanish Language to the Assistance of Foreign Citizens in the State of Paraná

A Comunicação Intercultural na Atividade Policial Militar: Contribuições da Língua Espanhola para o Atendimento de Cidadãos Estrangeiros no Estado do Paraná

La Comunicación Intercultural en la Actividad de la Policía Militar: Contribuciones del Idioma Español a la Atención de Ciudadanos Extranjeros en el Estado de Paraná

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Abstract:
The intensification of international migration flows, tourism, and the circulation of people in the Triple Frontier region has increased the presence of Spanish-speaking citizens in the State of Paraná, creating new challenges for public services, especially military police activities. This study aims to analyze the contributions of the Spanish language as a supporting tool for intercultural communication in the activities carried out by the Military Police of Paraná. To this end, a qualitative and exploratory study was conducted through bibliographic and documentary research, based on legislation, institutional documents, and scientific literature related to public security, human mobility, Community Policing, and intercultural communication. The findings indicate that communication is an essential element for the quality of police assistance, contributing to better understanding of information, reduction of language barriers, strengthening of legal certainty during police interactions, and closer relationships between the police institution and foreign citizens. It is concluded that basic knowledge of the Spanish language may be understood as a complementary communication tool for military police activities, particularly considering the geographical, touristic, and migratory characteristics of Paraná, contributing to greater efficiency in public service delivery and to strengthening the relationship between the police institution and society.

Keywords:
Intercultural communication. Military Police. Spanish language. Public security. Community policing.

Resumo:
A intensificação dos fluxos migratórios internacionais, do turismo e da circulação de pessoas na região da Tríplice Fronteira ampliou a presença de cidadãos hispanofalantes no estado do Paraná, impondo novos desafios aos serviços públicos, especialmente à atividade policial militar. O presente estudo objetiva analisar as contribuições da língua espanhola como ferramenta de apoio à comunicação intercultural nas atividades desenvolvidas pela Polícia Militar do Paraná. Para tanto, foi realizada pesquisa qualitativa, de caráter exploratório, fundamentada em revisão bibliográfica e documental, utilizando legislações, documentos institucionais e literatura científica relacionada à segurança pública, mobilidade humana, Polícia Comunitária e comunicação intercultural. Os resultados evidenciam que a comunicação representa elemento essencial para a qualidade do atendimento policial, favorecendo a compreensão das informações, a redução de barreiras linguísticas, o fortalecimento da segurança jurídica das abordagens e a aproximação entre a instituição policial e cidadãos estrangeiros. Conclui-se que o conhecimento básico da língua espanhola pode ser compreendido como ferramenta complementar de apoio à atividade policial militar, especialmente diante das características geográficas, turísticas e migratórias do Paraná,

contribuindo para maior eficiência na prestação do serviço público e para o fortalecimento da relação entre a corporação e a sociedade.

Palavras-chave:
Comunicação intercultural. Polícia Militar. Língua espanhola. Segurança pública. Polícia Comunitária.

Resumen:
La intensificación de los flujos migratorios internacionales, del turismo y de la circulación de personas en la región de la Triple Frontera ha incrementado la presencia de ciudadanos hispanohablantes en el estado de Paraná, generando nuevos desafíos para los servicios públicos, especialmente para la actividad de la Policía Militar. El presente estudio tiene como objetivo analizar las contribuciones del idioma español como herramienta de apoyo a la comunicación intercultural en las actividades desarrolladas por la Policía Militar del Estado de Paraná. Para ello, se realizó una investigación cualitativa, de carácter exploratorio, basada en revisión bibliográfica y documental, utilizando legislación, documentos institucionales y literatura científica relacionada con la seguridad pública, la movilidad humana, la Policía Comunitaria y la comunicación intercultural. Los resultados muestran que la comunicación constituye un elemento esencial para la calidad de la atención policial, favoreciendo la comprensión de la información, la reducción de las barreras lingüísticas, el fortalecimiento de la seguridad jurídica en las intervenciones policiales y el acercamiento entre la institución policial y los ciudadanos extranjeros. Se concluye que el conocimiento básico del idioma español puede entenderse como una herramienta complementaria de apoyo a la actividad policial militar, especialmente considerando las características geográficas, turísticas y migratorias del estado de Paraná, contribuyendo a una mayor eficiencia en la prestación del servicio público y al fortalecimiento de la relación entre la corporación policial y la sociedad.

Palabras clave:
Comunicación intercultural. Policía Militar. Idioma español. Seguridad pública. Policía Comunitaria.

INTRODUCTION

The intense international circulation of people and migratory flows have generated significant impacts on public services in various countries and the way they are provided, requiring institutions to have greater organization and capacity to adapt to these current social transformations. In Brazil, this scenario has gained relevance in recent years given the arrival of a significant number of migrants and refugees, as well as tourists visiting the country. This circumstance motivated the creation of Law No. 13,445, of May 24, 2017 (Migration Law), which established principles aimed at promoting equal treatment, social integration, and guaranteeing the rights of migrants (BRAZIL, 2017).

The state of Paraná ends up having a migratory dynamic with particular characteristics due to its strategic geographical position. The territorial boundaries with Argentina and Paraguay, combined with intense tourist activity and the presence of resident foreign communities,

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favor the circulation of individuals from countries that have Spanish as their native language, especially in municipalities located in the western region of the state, as well as in important urban centers, such as Curitiba and Cascavel (OBMIGRA, 2024).

In this context, the Military Police of Paraná develops its activities in constant interaction with the population, with communication being one of the main instruments used in providing police service. The correct transmission of information, together with the adequate interpretation of the demands presented and the mutual understanding between those involved, constitute relevant factors for the quality of service provided and for the safe handling of incidents. This understanding is supported by the National Public Security and Social Defense Policy, established by Law No. 13,675, of June 11, 2018, which recognizes the importance of integration, qualification, and continuous improvement of the actions developed by professionals in the area of public security (BRAZIL, 2018).

In certain situations, however, the existence of language barriers can hinder interaction between public agents and citizens from Spanish-speaking countries. Preventive guidance, victim support, conflict mediation, and clarification of administrative procedures are examples of activities that depend on communication for their proper execution. In these circumstances, communication emerges as a support element for police activity, helping to reduce misunderstandings and contributing to improved interactions between the institution and the public.

It is important to highlight that this research does not intend to discuss the mandatory nature of foreign language training, nor to propose curricular or administrative changes within the Paraná Military Police. The study seeks to analyze, from a bibliographic and documentary perspective, the relevance of the Spanish language as an auxiliary communication tool, considering the geographical, touristic, and migratory particularities of the state.

Given this scenario, the following research problem arises: **what are the contributions of the Spanish language as a tool to support intercultural communication in the military police activity carried out in the state of Paraná?**

The overall objective is to analyze the contributions of language as a tool to support intercultural communication in military police activity carried out in the state of Paraná. Specific objectives include: a) characterizing the geographical, touristic, and migratory context of the state; b) discussing the relevance of communication to military police activity; c) identifying the possible contributions of the Spanish language in specific service situations; and d) reflecting on the potential benefits resulting from the reduction of linguistic barriers.

Regarding the methodology and procedures applied, this is a qualitative, exploratory research study, developed through bibliographic and documentary review. The study is based

on legislation, institutional documents, and scientific publications related to public security, community policing, human mobility, and intercultural communication, taking as a reference the National Curriculum Matrix for Training Actions for Professionals in the Area of Public Security, which recognizes the relevance of competencies related to communication, human rights, and cultural diversity in the professional performance of public security agents (BRAZIL, 2014).

Paraná and the Challenges of Intercultural Communication

Context geographic , tourist and migratory

The state of Paraná holds a unique strategic position in the Southern region of Brazil due to its extensive international border with Argentina and Paraguay, as well as its significant economic, touristic, and logistical importance. This condition favors the intense circulation of people, goods, and services, making the state an important space for regional integration (IBGE, 2026).

Among the municipalities that stand out in this context is Foz do Iguaçu, internationally recognized for its proximity to Puerto Iguazú, in Argentina, and Ciudad del Este . In addition to the daily movement of residents from the border region, the municipality receives a significant number of national and international visitors due to tourist attractions such as the Iguazu Falls and Itaipu Dam, consolidating itself as one of the main tourist destinations in the country (FOZ DO IGUAÇU DESTINO DO MUNDO, 2025).

In parallel, Paraná has consolidated itself as one of the main states receiving migrants in the country. Information from the National Migration Registration System (SisMigra) indicates that the state had approximately 176,000 resident migrants as of the first half of 2024 (MINISTÉRIO PÚBLICO DO PARANÁ, 2025). Data from the Paraná Institute for Economic and Social Development also demonstrate that a significant portion of this population originates from countries such as Venezuela, Paraguay, Haiti, Cuba, and Argentina, highlighting the cultural diversity present in the state territory (IPARDES, 2025).

The International Organization for Migration highlights that human mobility is a permanent phenomenon and that the growing presence of migrants in urban centers demands adaptations from public institutions responsible for providing direct services to the population (IOM, 2025). From this perspective, linguistic diversity becomes part of the social reality of

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Paraná, making it pertinent to discuss mechanisms that promote communication between public services and individuals from Spanish-speaking countries .

Reflections for the activity military police

The demographic changes observed in recent years have a direct impact on the provision of public services, especially those that maintain constant contact with the population. Among these, the activity of the military police stands out, whose work ranges from preventive actions to emergency services and conflict mediation.

In this context, communication plays a fundamental role in handling incidents, as a large part of the procedures depends on the correct transmission and interpretation of information. Whatever the need for assistance and the measure to be taken in the specific case of each situation in police routine, mutual understanding on the part of both the sender and the receiver of the message is essential for the effectiveness of the public service provided to the population.

It is important to highlight that the presence of foreign citizens should not be associated with issues related to crime. In fact, it is a natural reflection of the social transformations resulting from the intensification of migratory flows and international tourism. The challenge presented to public bodies is related to the ability to develop efficient interactions in an increasingly diverse society.

The National Public Security and Social Defense Policy establishes, as one of its guidelines, the continuous qualification of services provided by public security professionals, recognizing the importance of constant training and specialization for public security professionals, as well as the development of related institutions (BRAZIL, 2018). Similarly, the National Curriculum Matrix for Training Actions for Public Security Professionals emphasizes communication, human rights, and cultural diversity as essential competencies for the effective application of these professionals (BRAZIL, 2014).

Intercultural communication can be understood as a tool to support police activity. More than just mastering a specific language, it involves recognizing that the ability to establish minimally efficient communication can contribute to reducing noise that hinders this exchange between two individuals, thus favoring interaction between the police institution and the population present in the state of Paraná.

This discussion takes on particular importance in a state that maintains intense social, economic, and touristic relations with Spanish-speaking countries. Therefore, analyzing this language as an auxiliary communication tool does not represent a proposal for professional

specialization, but rather a reflection on possibilities for improving the interactions developed in the daily provision of public services.

Communication as a tool to support police activity.

Communication , Community Policing and customer service humanized

Police work is characterized by very close contact between the institution and society, with communication being one of the main tools used in this public service. Unlike predominantly administrative activities, a large part of police duties is carried out through this direct contact, which needs to be agile and responsive, requiring the ability to transmit guidance, understand demands, and establish relationships based on clarity and trust.

Thus, communication transcends the status of an accessory mechanism and becomes an integral part of the operational dynamics of police activity. When interacting with victims to support them and gather information for emergency situations , as well as providing clarifications and guidance on necessary administrative procedures, the state representative agent needs to interact effectively.

The aforementioned National Curriculum Matrix for Training Actions for Public Security Professionals, which recognizes communication as a transversal competence necessary for professional practice, associates this skill with the development of important aspects, such as those related to human rights, cultural diversity, and social interaction (BRAZIL, 2014).

This understanding directly aligns with the principles of Community Policing, whose philosophy seeks to strengthen the relationship between the police institution and the population through cooperation and the building of trust. According to Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1994), public safety should not be understood as the exclusive responsibility of the police, but as a result of the partnership between the institution and the community.

Considering the scientific production developed by military police officers in Paraná, Souza highlights that institutional rapprochement and the maintenance of permanent channels of dialogue are relevant factors for improving the services provided to society (SOUZA, 2017). The work addresses a specific policing doctrine that is relevant to this discussion, as it includes aspects that address the pursuit of proximity, breaking down barriers, and promoting facilitators of police work and the consequent well-being of the population.

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> The doctrine of Community Policing proposes to guide behavioral change in communities and organizations . public , in search for solutions more structured and lasting , for the security problems public . In this context , through a Community policing develops a process of social mobilization , understood as a group of people organized to perform actions systematized , which result in Community Policing Projects , which have objectives general and specific , regulated by its own rule , aiming at the development of actions preventive measures aimed at resolving problems . local areas and improved quality of life for the population . (SOUZA, 2017, p. 122).

Similarly, Pegorini and Monteiro found that a positive perception of police performance is associated with the quality of interactions established between the police force and the community (PEGORINI; MONTEIRO, 2017). The authors specifically cite population growth, which includes the migrants mentioned in this study who, likewise, need greater proximity to the police, which is facilitated by good communication and so that they can be kept away from possible ineffectiveness of police service amidst so many challenges as described:

> The constant increase in crime, often occurring after rampant population growth, coupled with insufficient police service and a traditional policing model, causes distrust among the population, which alienates the community from the police and hinders improvements in public safety. As already discussed, problem-solving and crime prevention depend directly on the population's approach to and trust in the police. (PEGORINI; MONTEIRO, 2017, p. 143).

From this perspective, humanized service plays a prominent role in contemporary police activity. More than just executing operational procedures, police work demands a genuine ability to understand the needs of the public and to establish interactions based on respect, empathy, and the proper transmission of information.

In a society characterized by increasing cultural diversity, this discussion becomes even more relevant. The presence of individuals from different countries makes communication an essential element for building trust and improving the citizen experience during police services.

Communication , security legal and image institutional

Beyond its operational aspects, communication is also directly related to legal security and the construction of the institutional image of public security agencies. The proper transmission of information contributes to the understanding of adopted procedures, promoting transparency in actions and reducing the possibility of misinterpretations.

In daily police work, numerous activities depend on clear communication and require those involved to share a minimum understanding of the situation at hand. It is important to

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highlight that good service resulting from the ability of all involved to express themselves improves public safety for the population of Paraná as a whole. Whether victim or perpetrator, migrant or not, everyone benefits from the swift handling of incidents, which can often save lives. Consequently, the police force and the state government increase their connection with the public and gain recognition as a valuable public institution.

The literature produced within the Paraná Military Police also highlights the relevance of language in building institutional legitimacy. Garcia and Silva, when analyzing the relationship between media and the police, emphasize that the way communication is developed directly influences social perception of police action (GARCIA; SILVA, 2017).

Although the aforementioned study has a different focus from the present work, its conclusions allow us to understand that language goes beyond the mere transmission of information, also constituting an instrument of institutional rapprochement. Each interaction established between the Military Police and the population contributes to the formation of the corporation's image before society.

This reflection becomes especially relevant and pertinent given the increasing cultural diversity present in the state of Paraná. In certain situations, communication limitations can hinder the understanding of the instructions provided and increase the insecurity of those involved during the service.

In light of the above, effective communication can be understood as a mechanism to support police activity, promoting transparency, legal certainty, and closer ties between the institution and the public. More than a technical tool, communication represents an element capable of contributing to the construction of relationships based on trust and the strengthening of public service delivery.

The Spanish Language as a Tool to Support Intercultural Communication

Barriers linguistics and customer service situations police officer

Given the presented scenario, the exponential growth of migration, especially from countries where Spanish is the native language, presents new challenges to public services, particularly those closest to the population, such as police work when required, whether preventively or repressively, in the constant pursuit of respect for and preservation of the fundamental rights and guarantees of all people. Among these challenges, linguistic barriers stand

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out, which can hinder interaction between public agents and individuals from different cultural backgrounds.

Although most services provided by the Paraná Military Police are conducted in Portuguese, the state's geographic and migratory context favors situations involving people from Spanish-speaking countries . In these circumstances, communication limitations can hinder the understanding of basic instructions and compromise the quality of interactions established during the service.

It is important to emphasize that the present discussion is not related to the creation of new functional responsibilities or the requirement of specialized training. It concerns the recognition that cultural diversity is an increasingly present characteristic in contemporary society and that communication represents a relevant mechanism for bringing public bodies and the population closer together.

The Migration Law establishes principles related to equal treatment, social integration, and migrants' access to public services, highlighting the importance of mechanisms that promote inclusion and understanding of information transmitted by state agents (BRAZIL, 2017). From this perspective, intercultural communication emerges as a complementary instrument capable of fostering interaction between the police institution and the population served.

Potential contributions to activity military police

The analysis developed throughout this study allows us to understand that the Spanish language can be interpreted as an auxiliary communication tool in specific service situations, especially in a state that maintains intense social, economic, and tourist relations with Spanish-speaking countries.

It is important to highlight that this proposal does not presuppose advanced language proficiency, nor linguistic specialization on the part of public security professionals. The objective is to recognize that the ability to understand and transmit basic information can contribute to reducing communication noise and improving interactions during police intervention, which encompasses a very diverse range of incidents, many of which require direct and immediate contact with people unfamiliar with the procedures adopted by Brazilian authorities.

In these cases, the ability to understand basic expressions and convey simple instructions can contribute to the smooth running of the incident, facilitating the gathering of essential information and reducing difficulties arising from the language barrier. This does not involve conducting complex interviews or producing formal documents in a foreign language, but rather

using minimal communication skills that allow for an effective initial contact between the police officer and the citizen.

This possibility proves relevant in various routine police situations, such as responding to traffic accidents involving foreign tourists, assisting victims, guiding visitors in public places, initially recording information in incident reports, and providing instructions related to safety procedures. In all these examples, communication represents a facilitating element in police action, without replacing the formal mechanisms provided for in legislation when the involvement of interpreters or translators is necessary.

Basic knowledge of the Spanish language should be understood as a complementary skill, capable of expanding the possibilities of interaction between the military police officer and the population served. It is a resource that can contribute to making the service clearer, reducing communication errors, and providing greater peace of mind to the people involved, especially in moments of vulnerability or immediate need for guidance.

In addition to operational benefits, reducing language barriers can also foster a sense of welcome on the part of foreign citizens. Demonstrating institutional effort to establish understandable communication tends to strengthen the relationship of trust between the Military Police and the community, in line with the principles of Community Policing and the pursuit of providing an efficient public service oriented towards the needs of society (TROJANOWICZ; BUCQUEROUX, 1994; BRAZIL, 2014).

Therefore, the Spanish language should not be understood as an end in itself, but as a resource to support police activity in specific contexts of the reality of Paraná. Considering the geographical characteristics of the state, its location in a border region, and the growing presence of tourists and migrants from Spanish-speaking countries , the development of basic communication skills proves compatible with the principles of efficiency, proximity to the community, and continuous improvement in the provision of public service.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study aimed to analyze the contributions of the Spanish language as a tool to support intercultural communication in military police activity carried out in the state of Paraná, considering the geographical, touristic, and migratory particularities that characterize the state's reality.

Bibliographic and documentary research has identified that Paraná occupies a strategic position in the national scenario due to its proximity to Argentina and Paraguay, as well as the

significant circulation of tourists, migrants, and residents from Spanish-speaking countries . This context highlights the growing cultural diversity present in the state and demonstrates that public bodies responsible for directly serving the population are dealing with increasingly diverse demands.

Throughout the study, it was found that communication is one of the main instruments used in police activity, playing a relevant role in guiding the population, assisting victims, mediating conflicts, and transmitting information necessary for the proper handling of incidents. In this sense, the quality of the interactions established between the police institution and society has the potential to influence the effectiveness of the service provided and the social perception of institutional performance.

It was also found that intercultural communication is compatible with the principles related to Community Policing, humanized service, and the guidelines established by the National Public Security and Social Defense Policy. Therefore, the Spanish language can be understood as a tool to support police activity, especially in specific situations involving people from Spanish-speaking countries .

The purpose of this work was not to propose curricular changes, discuss the mandatory nature of foreign language training, or suggest administrative changes related to the professional development of military police officers. The discussion was limited to recognizing communication as a complementary element capable of contributing to the improvement of interactions established between the Military Police of Paraná and the population served.

In conclusion, intercultural communication is a relevant topic for police activity in the state of Paraná, especially due to its potential to foster mutual understanding between the police institution and society. Although this research is primarily bibliographic and documentary in nature, its results point to the importance of continuing studies related to communication applied to public safety, particularly in light of the social transformations and growing cultural diversity observed in contemporary reality.

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