

## The Institutionalization of the Teaching of Modern Languages in Brazil (1809-1890)

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### Abstract

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This article intends to identify, describe and analyze the institutionalization of the teaching of foreign languages in Brazil during the nineteenth century, from 1809 to 1890, dividing it into three phases. During the first phase (1809-1837), which comprises the Joanino government and that of his successor D. Pedro I, as well as the Regency period, and which continues until the foundation of Colégio de Pedro II and the institution of the Secondary Education in the country, Modern Languages have a purpose that is eminently instrumental, since their study is justified as a means to acquire "scientific" knowledge. The second phase (1837-1870) begins with the institution of Secondary Instruction in the country, which coincides with the foundation of Colégio de Pedro II, when the teaching of Modern Languages, besides its instrumental role, assumes a literary purpose, more in accordance with the type of formation the Establishments modeled according to that institution should offer to students. The third phase (1870-1890), at last, begins when Modern Languages, by maintaining their instrumental and literary character, assume a practical purpose, as a "means of communication of thought", despite the "exaggerated grammatical influence".

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**Keywords:** Brazil; Modern Languages; History of Education; History of English Teaching; Schooling.

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## 1. The First Phase

There are three phases concerning the institutionalization of the teaching of Modern Languages in Brazil in their process of configuration as a school discipline during the nineteenth century (1809-1890). At the same time, three are the purposes which prevailed throughout the indicated period. Such purposes, which are political, pedagogical and cultural, correspond to their respective periods, or phases, and are named according to their character or status, by taking into account the social and political conditions in which they are processed.

During the first phase (1809-1837), which comprises the Joanino government and that of his successor D. Pedro I, as well as the Regency period, and which continues until the foundation of Colégio de Pedro II and the institution of the Secondary Education in the country, Modern Languages have a purpose that is eminently instrumental, since their study is justified as a means to acquire “scientific” knowledge and which was professed, at times, by foreign Teachers, who used Compendia written in the French or English languages in the Military Academies, in the Medical and Surgical Courses, in the Classes on Business and Agriculture or in the Legal Courses, the centers of formation of the Civil Society, or of the local elite, which excluded those who were not “citizens”, according to the interpretation of the period as to the Article 6 of the Constitution of 1824: slaves and dispossessed and free men (Oliveira, 2010a).

Although the Decision n. 29, 14 July 1809, which created the first Public Chairs of the French and English languages in the country, when stating about the “teaching discipline”, asked the teachers to enable their Pupils to “speak and write well” through the “best models of Louis XIV century” and know, in the translations, “the geniuses, and idiocies of the language, and its beauty and elegance, and the most followed and accurate style and taste”, by suggesting an aesthetic approach, as well as a determination of cultural value, while teaching those languages, something which had already been done in Latin – believed to be the “basis of all sciences”, as the preamble of the Charter, in which Pombal expelled the Jesuits from Portugal and its domains, in 1759 -, and partially by the French language, considered at that time a “universal language” (Brasil, 1891), the creation of such Chairs corresponded to the expectations of the Joanino government when it came to preparing candidates to enter the Higher Studies, or higher education courses, which demanded from the student the ability to translate at least the French Language in order to attend them.

Together with this instrumental purpose, characterized by its illustrated character, since it enabled people to have access to the intellectual production of the European cultured nations, there was also an utilitarian purpose, in the case of the English Language, which was effective in a moment in which the country had just opened its harbors to foreign business, principally with the English people, which, impeded by the continental blockage imposed by Napoleon, needed other markets for its own survival, obtaining advantageous conditions in the Treaty between the Portuguese and British Crowns when the British negotiated the protection of Dom João, on his escape from the threats of the French Emperor, in exchange for almost all of the Brazilian market monopoly. Many of the English Grammar books published in the period testified it, in their prefaces, and mainly in the texts used in the exercises, most of which are composed of bills of exchange and commercial correspondence, as well as the worry the government had in creating positions of Interpreters and Translators in the harbors of several Provinces and in the Secretaries of some public offices (Oliveira, 2010a).

As to its process of configuration as a school discipline, if we consider its four main components: explicit content of knowledge; a series of exercises, students' motivation and the Exams, the nucleus of the discipline, composed of the first two, is formed in this first phase, since its theoretical or expositive part is already ready, based on the Latin Grammar, whose terms and classifications are also used in the study of Modern Languages, as we saw in the case of English. The exercises, the same way, initially centered in reading, pronunciation, translation, version and composition, had as a support a long term tradition, because the Decision of 1809 obliged the teachers to follow, as to "time", "hours of the lessons" and "attestations" of the Pupils development, the same as it was established, and "practiced", by the teachers of Latin Grammar (Oliveira, 2010b). Although the English Compendia of the period, from the Grammar by J. Castro, 1751, to the *Arte Inglezaby* the priest Guilherme Tilbury, 1827, tried to motivate their Pupils or readers by justifying its teaching because of the utilitarian character of the Language and because its knowledge was obligatory in some higher studies – and even by asserting that it should be considered one of the "universal", "as the Latin and French language have been", according to Manoel de Freitas Brasileiro, in the preface of his *Nova grammatikaportuguesa e ingleza*, 1812 -, we cannot say that such a motivation had to do with specific pedagogical methods to reach its purposes, since the texts chosen for reading and translation, when not based on "Family Dialogues" or in commercial plays, were composed, in their majority, of Latin classical texts (Oliveira, 2010a).

Concerning the Exams, which are fundamental components in the process of configuration of a given school discipline (Chervel, 1990), though they were put into effect with the creation of the Legal Courses – the French exams, in 1827, and the English exams, with the Reform of 1831 -, their consolidation took place only with the Regulation of 1834, signed by Couto Ferraz, since the difficulties and problems caused by the lack of teachers and by conflicts of legal competence between the Central Government and the Provinces made it impossible to implement them. The two Languages, at least until the decade of 1860, were taught by the same teacher in the Preparatory Classes which were part of those courses (Oliveira, 2006).

## **2. The Second Phase**

The second phase (1837-1870) begins with the institution of Secondary Instruction in the country, which coincides with the foundation of Colégio de Pedro II, when the teaching of Modern Languages, besides its instrumental role, assumes a literary purpose, more in accordance with the type of formation the Establishments modeled according to that institution should offer to students, and which was close enough to an “*educação literária*”, to use an expression of that time, and continues until the reform of its regulations by the Decree n. 4.468, 1 February 1870, signed by the Counselor Paulino José Soares de Souza, the son of Viscount of Uruguai and Minister of Empire, who reformulated the Plan of Studies of the School considering the supremacy scientific teaching starts to have in the Secondary Instruction.

In this second moment, the study of Modern Languages justifies itself in its own subject, as it is not only an instrument of access to other areas of knowledge as, by means of the knowledge of Literature, a concept which is developed in Brazil in the thirties, it would be possible to understand the “*spirit*” of the peoples of Civilized Nations, because, as Gonçalves de Magalhães stated, in the first number of *Niterói* magazine, “each people has its own literature as each man has his own character, each tree its own fruit” (apud Oliveira, 2006).

The Regency government, represented by the Conservative Party, had great interest in such a study, not only to satisfy its civilizatory project, by means of the contact Brazilian students would have with the literary production of the “civilized nations”, but also because of the role it could exert towards the formation and development of a spirit of nationality, mainly after the official announcement of the teaching of National Literature, in 1854, period of total supremacy of the Conservative Party (Mattos, 1999).

Even the English Compendia of the period, initially devoted to their commercial utility, show this change, which is highlighted by the continuous simplification of rules and grammatical explanations by reading, and by the substitution of the bills of exchange by excerpts in prose and verse by modern authors, most of them Romantic writers.

Therefore, the emphasis given to the exercises of version and translation, be it in the Plans of Study of the imperial School, be it in the Preparatory Exams, before pointing to the permanence of an old-fashioned method of teaching, made Modern Languages to assume a literary status more than an instrumental one, as most part of their activities had as their object pieces of work and representative authors of their Literatures, which did not happen in the previous phase, when in the category Literature many works were related to Mathematics and Sciences, although in the distinction between literary and scientific occupations Medicine was still amongst the first ones.

However, it does not mean that its instrumental purpose did not exist anymore. It is renewed and even intensified, but in a totally different way if compared to its first phase. If, before the knowledge of Modern Languages was an important way to reach the “lights of the century”, as it was said, which were mixed up with what was understood by “Science”, the objectives of its teaching, in the system of Public Instruction of the time, could be clearly defined by the necessity of understanding and translating foreign Compendia used in the higher education courses. Now, if such knowledge was worth for its own sake, as Literature was part of the study of the Language, which was conducted in the Programs of the Imperial School, in its most part, by means of the exercises of reading, recitation and translation of selective excerpts by troubadours and poets, the instrumental character of its teaching and, mainly, of its learning, is linked with the ability that was necessary for one to succeed in the Preparatory Exams, which provided access to the Imperial Colleges (Haidar, 1972).

In this second phase, Modern Languages have all the components that form a school discipline, since their motivation and system of evaluation consolidate themselves, the first one by the official adoption of the Method of Robertson, in the "Teaching Program" of the imperial school issued in 1859, and the second one by the preponderance that the Preparatory Exams assume in the system of Public Instruction of the period, principally after the reformation by CoutoFerraz.

Although the Method of Robertson was still based on "grammatical analysis" – which can be considered the main pedagogical method of the Latin Grammar -, as well as in the rules concerning pronunciation and translation, as it appears in the *Novo curso de lingua inglezapratico, analytico, theorico e sinthetico*, by T. Robertson, Compendium written by Cyro Cardozo de Menezes published in 1856, its adoption represents an innovation in the teaching of Modern Languages, since part of the exercises are linked with selective texts which are prepared having as their basis a series of episodes, or "sketches", with the same characters and reasons, which were used to motivate grammatical explanations. The Preparatory Exams, in turn, were based on the translation of "classical excerpts" and demanded grammatical analysis in the oral exams (Menezes, 1856).

The other components, in this process, were reformulated. The content, now exposed in a "didactic" way, considering it was easier for students to assimilate it, detaches, gradually, from the Latin Grammar, which is shown by the substitution of terms like "orthography" and "syntax" by simpler terms like "letters", "words" and "phrases" in the Compendia of the period, the same occurring with the exercises, mainly after the adoption of the Method of Robertson, which was known in Brazil, at least in the Court, since 1842, as the publication suggests, of this same year, of the *Novo cursopratico, analytico, theorico e synthetico de lingua inglezapor Th. Robertson*, "translated and applied to the Portuguese language, by Antonio Francisco Dutra e Mello and João Maximiano Mafra, work which was adapted by the teachers George Gibson and Joseph Pleasant and "offered to the studious Brazilian youth" (Oliveira, 2006).

However, even having the four main components which form a school discipline, we cannot consider the Modern Languages as such in this phase, because their teaching was neither related to the verb “discipline”, though their literary purpose contributed to the formation of students’ spirit, nor to the concept of “intellectual gymnastics”, which is going to happen from the seventies on, a period of intensive debates around the renewal of the purposes of the Primary and Secondary Instruction in Brazil, mainly after the publication, in 1870, and of the translation into Portuguese, in 1871, of the Hippeau’s report about the Public Instruction in the United States.

### 3. The Third Phase

The third phase (1870-1890), at last, begins when Modern Languages, by maintaining their instrumental and literary character, assume a practical purpose, as a “means of communication of thought”, despite the “exaggerated grammatical influence” – according to Professor Carlos de Laet, in a report of 1882 -, which occurs with the reform by Counselor Paulino José Soares de Souza, in 1870, and finishes when the English language is no longer an obligatory discipline in the Plan of Studies of Colégio de Pedro II, by the Decree n. 1.075, on 22 November 1890, signed by Benjamin Constant.

Before the reform, in 1870, the adjective “practical” had been used with success by Fillipe da Motta de AzevedoCorrêa, in his “best-seller” *Grammaticaprática da lingua inglesa*, as well as by several foreign authors of Language Courses during the 19th century, such as Robertson (*Novo cursoprático, analytico, theorico e synthetico de lingua inglesa*), Ollendorff (*Novo methodoprático para aprender a ler, escrever e fallar a lingua inglesa em seis mezes*) e Ahn (*Novo methodoprático e facil de aprender a Lingua Inglesa*). According to Howatt (1988: 132), the word “practical”, in such Compendia, refers to the practice of exercises used by the “grammar-translation method”, principally the ones related to the translation and version of lists of sentences. Another reason for the emphasis on practice, according to the same author, is the priority given to correction, as well as the moral value of the sentences used as examples.

However, AzevedoCorrêa, in the preface of the first edition of his *Grammaticapratica* (1863), when asserting that “the experience of every day” had convinced him that the best method in the teaching of Languages was the one which associated theory and practice, censured the “theoretical methods” because they demanded from young students the “perfect accuracy in the copy or due attention and rapid comprehension of what is being exposed”, making them waste plenty of time in the learning process. Then, in his speech, the “practical method” appears in opposition to what Howatt considers “practical” in the “grammar translation method”. The expression “practical purpose”, in this work, is related to the inclusion of a new element amongst the objectives of the teaching of Modern Languages: the communication of thought, and not only by the reading and composition, that is, by means of the written language, but also, and mainly, by the development of the oral and aural abilities of the students.

To this end, the Decree n. 4.468, 1 February 1870, signed by the Counselor Paulino, begins such process because, for the first time, a law demanded that the teachers of Modern Languages did not speak in their lessons in another language other than the one they taught. In the Report of the noticeable happenings of the school year of 1882”, the professor Carlos de Laet favored the “practical teaching of modern languages” by saying that, through the “classical methods”, only translation is taught, but not comprehension towards spoken language, and not speaking, and that the ear was the main organ to be educated, because thoughts were conveyed through sounds (Oliveira, 2006).

It is curious that, in order to prove his arguments were true, Carlos de Laet referred to François Gouin (1831-1896), whose “series” are to become an important reference of the “scientific method”, which Chagas (1967: 61) qualifies as “the last phase of the direct method”, the one which, according to the same author, made new ideas to start circulating, half a century after the manifest of Viëtor (1850-1918), one of the pioneers of the movement of reform of the teaching of Languages at the end of the 19th century, according to Howatt (1988: 169).

However, although the teaching of Modern Languages, according to the congregation of the imperialSchool, in a decision of 1884, should avoid “grammatical details”, it could not be excessively practical, “because of the insignificant importance given to the systems of Ahn, Ollendorf or Robertson”, which were more appropriate to the pupils of any “industrial institute”, and not to advanced students in Latin.

It means that the practical purpose assumed by the teaching of those Languages did not mix up with the utilitarian character of their instrumental purpose, in a period in which the market, motivated by the regulation of new occupations which demanded the knowledge of French and English in their admission tests, seems to be very much receptive to methods that promised to be faster and efficient.

An important aspect of this third phase has to do with the gradual loss of the literary statute of Modern Languages, which occurs together with the institutionalization of the teaching of Foreign Literatures. The reform of 1870, though to the seventh grade of the course of the Imperial School had been reserved the “improvement of the Latin, French and English languages”, with “elementary teaching” about character, formation and progress of each one of them, alternated with reading, translation and “literary appreciation” of the classical authors, instituted for the first time the teaching of their respective Literatures in an autonomous manner, that is, apart from their Languages.

Such a process is related to a change in the focus given to literary studies, represented by the Program of Rhetoric and Poetry, which, besides the rules of style and composition and of the “literary appreciation of the best classical works of the Portuguese language”, started to include the “History of literature in general, and especially that of the Portuguese and national literature”.

This way, if the literary purpose of the teaching of Modern Languages was based on a series of exercises – reading, copy, dictation, version, translation, themes and composition – which had excerpts of literary texts as their object, it would have to justify itself through the study of Literary History, that is, the “literary productions” of the foreign nations, which awoke the feeling of proud and respect in their peoples, contributing towards the moral and patriotic formation of the students, as it is stated by Canon FernandesPinheiro in the “Prolegomenos” of his *Resumo de historialitteraria* (1873).

In the case of the English language, the new orientation of the law motivated the publication of several Conversation Guides, as well as some Compendia mainly devoted to pronunciation, the case of *Prosodiaingleza*, by the North American professor Jasper L. Harben, whose seventh edition was published in 1878.

The purpose of the book, according to its author, in the preface, was to provide students with a “higher level of intellectual betterment” through the “analysis of the LANGUAGE and of the principles of *thought*”, because the systematic study of prosody would improve not only their style but also their understanding and “way of thinking”.

Harben did not despise the literary content of the teaching of the English language, because, although he stated it was necessary, before studying any language, to have in mind the effect that such study would produce in the intelligence and its “practical use”, he believed that the most effective way to learn its “real pronunciation” was through the reading of verses. English Literature would give examples of excellence, enabling students to acquire the most intimate knowledge of the beauty of the Language, as well as its characteristic “taste” and “genius”, something which was being reached by elegant and skilled women who had studied with the author “in the most sophisticated houses”.

Such literary appeal, which was maintained until 1878 with successive editions, was due to the fact that most of its audience was composed of those women cited above, because, being its Compendia in accordance with the reform of 1870, which reserved for the seventh grade the “literary appreciation” of the classical authors of the Latin, French and English Languages, after the “elementary lessons” about character, formation and progress of each one of them, no longer adjusted itself after the change caused by the Decree n. 6.130, 1 March 1876, signed by the Minister José Bento da Cunha e Figueiredo, because, according to the new law, the notions of Foreign Literatures would be studied only in the Class of National Literature of the seventh grade (Brasil, 1877a).

In his report of 1877, the minister justified the reform because of the complaints by the Rectors of the School, who claimed that the reason for the bad quality of the French, English and German lessons was “the recognized unprofitability of the special classes of the literature of foreign languages”, which had only a lesson a week and whose teachers, who were the same in both establishments, confessed they were not entitled to it. Cunha e Figueiredo defended that the teaching of Foreign Literatures should be abolished since he had been the General Inspector, as it is shown in his report of 1872, in which he accuses the Regulation of 1870 of burdening the teachers of Languages (Brasil, 1877b).

Silvio Romero assumed a different position, in a report of 1885, which was related to “the “noticeable happenings” of Colégio de Pedro II of the previous year. To the professor, the teaching of Modern Languages should be offered in each one of the years of the course, the way it was proposed by the congregation in its report. In its learning, the “practical method” would prevail, so that students would speak and write such languages fairly well”, but, in seven or eight years, students should read “masterpieces of these languages, by proving, then, that a special chair for the universal literature and another one for rhetoric, poetic and the national literature was dispensable” (Brasil, 1885).

Nevertheless, the teaching of Modern Languages remained apart from its respective literatures, or from its Literary History, since it was included in the Programs of other disciplines such as General Literature, History of Literature and Portuguese, after the reform of 1881, the last one of the imperial period. The reforms of the First Republic did not change such a structure, even when the inclusion of “literary evolution” in the program of Languages was proposed, by the Decree n. 8.660, April 5 1911, signed by the minister RivadáviaCorrêa, as it is suggested in the thesis *Origens da língua inglesa – sua literatura*(1920), by Oscar Przewodowski, a writer from Bahia and the professor of the English Chair at Colégio de Pedro II, whose “historical outline” of the English Literature did not correspond to the purposes of the “best method” to teach the Language (Oliveira, 1999: 170).

It was only in 1943, with the Ministerial Order n.148, 15 February, signed by Gustavo Capanema, the minister of the Estado Novo – who put into effect, during his period of office, a series of Regulations entitled Teaching Organic Laws -, its study became part of the corresponding Chairs of Languages, being the “general notions of literature” transferred to the Program of Portuguese of the first grade. The new law, however, was enacted until 1951, when the Ordinance n. 614, 10 May, signed by the minister SimõesFilho, who, by simplifying the Programs of several disciplines of the Secondary Course, removed from the Modern Languages the study of their respective Literatures (Oliveira, 1999: 171).

As to the “practical guidance” of the General Exams for the Preparatory Courses, which adopted, in 1884, the exercise of free composition instead of the version, in accordance with the “practical thinking that must guide the study of modern languages”, the system was soon criticized, as it is shown in the report of 1891, by the minister JoãoCarvalhoUchôaCavalcanti, to whom the composition in Portuguese and its version into a foreign language was not a serious test, because “either the industrious student tries to write short and easy sentences, which can be easily translated and shorten his work, saying that there is lack of subjects or he includes some sentences which were already prepared [...]”. To give an end to such problems, Benjamin Constant had issued, on 11 October 1890, Instructions by means of which the General Exams for the Preparatory Courses in the Federal Capital demanded that the written tests of French, English and German should have a version of a little text in Portuguese “in current prose” and the translation of a poetic excerpt chosen at random, “never shorter than 20 lines” (Brasil, 1890).

As we can see, this third phase of the process of institutionalization of the teaching of Modern languages in Brazil does not have the cyclical or closed aspect of the two previous ones, because neither the optional character of the English Language is maintained for so long, nor the practical purpose of that teaching is abolished in the year chosen to its final delimitation.

On the contrary, it is intensified in the First Republic, reaching its apex, to say so, with the Direct Method, in 1931, if we read, literally, the text of the first article of the Decree n. 20.833, 21 December: “the teaching of Modern Languages at Colégio de Pedro II and establishments of Secondary Education to which it serves as a model [...] will have a practical character”. The option to establish the final limit of this process in 1890 is due to two main reasons. The first of them is that the practical purpose of the teaching of Modern Languages does not mix up with a “practical method” to teach them, though it is related to it, because its constitution depends on the political, pedagogical and cultural conditions in which it configures itself, differently from the methods, which may be imported, adapted or appropriated. The second reason is that the year of 1931 cannot mark the end of a process which continues even after the establishment of the Language Courses, or of the end of the teaching of Modern Languages as being obligatory, when the Law of Basic Guidelines was put into effect, in 1961.

Thus, in this third phase, besides the fact that the practical purpose of Modern Language teaching is characterized by the simplification of grammatical explanations and the exploration of the speaking and listening skills, considered as unnecessary from the point of view of its instrumental or literary purpose, it represents a certain conception about the role of that education in its intellectual development, and that is why it was justified by the speeches and its ability to provide them with conditions so that they could communicate their thoughts through writing or speech. However, its implementation was much more complex than its prescription, as shown by the constant concern of the congregation, in its reports of 1883, 1884 and 1885.

Indeed, trying to make the Modern Languages teaching "more practical", so that students could reason, write and speak foreign languages during the whole class, giving evidence of having understood the text and teacher explanations, exercising the memory and reasoning, as wished by the Dean of Antonio Henriques Leal Internship, in 1883, was not an easy task, especially when it is taken into consideration that such skills were totally unnecessary in the Preparatory General Exams, even after the reform which could be seen in the following year. In order to accomplish it, it was necessary to begin to study them from the early years of the course, as proposed by the congregation of the Imperial School, in the 1884 report, in which it was proved that by having two weekly lessons in each language, students might have more familiarity with the authors, observing the "morphologic and syntactic anomalies" that appeared in the studied sites, contrary to what was observed with the regulations of the institution since 1841.

In this sense, the practical purpose of Modern Language teaching, in its context, assumes a political aspect as well, bringing claims of a group of intellectuals, covered by certain legislating power – the teachers of the imperial school– in such a way that, a consolidating moment was the target, at a time when the "positivist spirit of science", as Rui Barbosa stated in 1882, came to the agenda, and was manifested even in naturalistic literature of the period, and in which the excessively literary character of the secondary studies was severely criticized for its "scarce scientific notions," according to this author, and which tried to give those materials a "scientific" status.

Thus, if Science, as it was defined by Rui Barbosa, was "every observation, every correctness, every experimental verification", the practical teaching of Modern Languages, responsible to enable students to speak and write properly in foreign languages, would have to take advantage of "principles of modern glottis", the "phonology and taxonomy" and "the latest developments in philology", according to Silvio Romero, in his "Notes on the public school", if it wanted to be understood as a rational and scientific practice, just as the study of dead languages, especially Latin, which was seen "in the guise of an intellectual Gymnastics".

Such scientific claim, presented as a practical purpose, represents the last stage of a process in which modern languages, justified, in the past, as a simple class, due to its instrumental and then literary characteristic, are considered as school subject, once they intent to participate in the "hierarchic framework of sciences", contributing to the harmonious and integral development of students' intellectual and affective faculties, as wished by Romero regarding the students of the imperial school and after the National Gymnasium. This process, however, does not occur in a linear, and progressive way, in the absence of conflicts, since, as Ian Michael, quoted by Goodson (1995: 158) says, "talking about phase means oversimplifying what is in reality a complex agenda of changes which occur at different times, different speeds and with different degrees of stability".

When the Secondary Education was established in Brazil, for example, the distinction between Science and Languages did not seem to be clearly defined among the intellectuals of that time, as suggested by the deputy Souza Martins in the 1846 session, in which the creation of an Internship School was discussed.

The deputy considered that the study of three modern languages - French, English and German - and two Dead ones - Latin and Greek - was excessive, because it would eventually harm the "scientific and literary" studies that could be seen in the school, what shows that, at least in some speeches of that time, even after 1837, the year Colégio de Pedro II was founded – the Modern Languages did not have a "literary" status, and its utility was justified by the commercial relationships that a nation would have with another one or by geographical proximity.

In 1867, however, Liberato Barroso, in "*A instrução pública no Brasil*", would say that cultivating "the old languages with modern languages and literature", students would be prepared for wider knowledge of Higher Education, since, if men were engaged in industry, agriculture and trade, they would need a "practical instruction" indispensable to the material development of the country, others would have to devote themselves to the noble professions of the spirit, i.e., the "literary instruction", a fundamental requirement to their moral development (Barroso, 1867).

In the eighties, when Rui Barbosa tries to justify the inseparability of Science and the Languages in Colégio de Pedro II, suggesting the requirement of elementary knowledge of Physics, Chemistry and Natural Sciences, with special development of Anatomy and Physiology, he asserts that the Modern Language teaching by translations and themes was unproductive because no one can learn a foreign language without knowing how to speak. His proposal, however, was considered as impossible due to the Syllabus itself, which was prepared for the Imperial School, since, in six years, the student should learn a great variety of languages: German, Italian, English and French, besides Latin, Greek and Portuguese.

Such variety was soon the object of criticism, as it is shown by the report written by Antonio Ferreira Vianna in 1889, which compared the syllabus of Colégio de Pedro II with the ones which could be seen in similar institutions in Europe and the United States, and he was able to affirm that countries which could be considered as more developed, despite the mandatory requirement of offering just one Modern Language, worked more on these languages, and the courses would last from eight to nine years. The minister, however, did not share the same opinions presented by the champions of scientific education in the institution, even knowing he did not stop using his rhetoric, since his arguments aimed to defend the study of the humanities, suggesting a return to the primitive organization of the school, "keeping the scientific principles that governed it". In his view, it was not lawful getting rid of one or two of the Modern Languages, "attentive to the conditions of our social status and our poor scientific and imaginative literature."

Thus, the position of the minister is emblematic concerning the main problem that could be identified in this third phase of the institutionalization of the Modern Languages in Brazil: the political aspect in which the scientific discourse was immersed, regarding their practical purposes.

This speech came from the congregation at the imperial school, which reached legislating power in 1881, due to the reform which had last changed the syllabus of that institution in the Empire. Since then, the congregation was required to submit an annual report of "notable events" of both facilities, which would be attached to the one produced by the Minister of the Empire, and the congregation was also asked to establish special committees in order to elaborate Instructions on the subjects related to the Public Instruction.

This speech recognized the importance of a "realistic and practical" education, but, on the other hand, prioritized a "classical and belletristic" formation, ignoring all the modern methods, pedagogical processes, new guidance and other similar words, as in the text written by Romero, who defends the Classics "scientifically" taught by Philology, so that students could obtain an "intellectual culture", against what he considered a severe disease: "the Americanization of intelligence and character", which proposed an instruction without lifting or ideals, industrial, greedy, which did not educate.

In order to avoid that the speech would sound as if it were retrograde, at a time when the word "progress" took on political significance, the "scientific" and "modern" adjectives functioned as updating elements concerning the new times, as it is suggested by the report written by professor Tautphoeus, based on the diagnosis of Antonio Ferreira Viana, in 1889, in which it is transcribed the opinion of the congregation about a Secondary Studies reform proposed by that minister. The "scientific decadence" of the Imperial School, for example, was due to the abandonment of the simultaneity of the studies, as it was established by the plan of its primitive institution.

This Plan, which had been perpetuated for nearly twenty years after the School foundation, graduated students who attained eminent positions, contrary to what was seen afterwards, after the adoption of the fateful system of fractionated studies, introduced not due to some new pedagogical principles, but by petty considerations of material competition with private Institutions, when the purpose of founding the Imperial School was to establish a place of literary studies which, being independent of student's affluence, could be kept in aliterary and scientific position above the general level of secondary instruction.

#### 4. Conclusion

The three objectives of Modern Language teaching have one characteristic in common: the elitist element, because their knowledge was restricted to a very strict and privileged class of citizens: those who took advantage of its instrumental use, as the candidates for the Preparatory Exams, and those who had learned literary or practical skills in Secondary Education Establishments, and who had been gathered in an even more restricted class, since their goal was to train men who would later occupy prominent positions, as wished by the teacher Tautphoeus in the report transcribed above, or by the Minister Gustavo Capanema, fifty-three years later, in the Explanatory Memorandum of Decree 4244, from April, 9<sup>th</sup>, 1942: "secondary education is destined to the preparation of the leading individualities" (Oliveira, 1999:82).

Based on the principles defended by Chervel (1991), considering the three purposes mentioned, only the instrumental is a "real purpose", and the others are just "objectives", because if all teaching must rescue, in its didactic apparatus, quantitative or quantifiable elements that can provide measurable scales in its evaluative system, or in tests, and if the history of school subjects shall focus on learning, i.e., the acculturation performed by the student in the school context, the other purposes – the literary and practical one – cannot comply with what is proposed, not even after 1931, when the Direct Method becomes official, or 1943, when the study of Foreign Literatures was, again, associated to the correspondent Language subjects. Its instrumental purpose, in turn, after being configured in the first phase, was kept in the second, in a new way though, being consolidated in the third one, and remaining intact until the present day.

However, as in this paper it was adopted such an option which would consider such purposes in their relations with the official texts, that is, with the legislation related to the matter, all are valued the same, as they all equally contribute to the setting process of Modern Languages as school subjects.

The English language, when compared with French in this process, runs a reverse trajectory. In the first phase, despite the instrumental characteristic of both languages, the French had already had a cultural and even literary status, as it was held as universal, being received as part of education, as it happened to Music and Dance.

The English language, on the other hand, was justified as necessary to youth due to the fact that the vocal sounds of this language could be heard in Brazil daily, because of the negotiations that Brazilians had with the English nation, as it is suggested by Manoel José de Freitas, in the Preface of his Grammar published in 1820. The same author, in 1812, in the preface of another Compendium, warned his readers that the English language should be considered a universal one, as it had happened to the Latin and French languages, because all reading genres could be identified, both those which graced the thought and those that might dilate ideas, position which would be just occupied in the second phase. In the third stage, the French language becomes an object of utilitarian methods of language teaching, such as Ahnand Ollendorff, taking a commercial utility that was just due to English, in the first phase.

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