

Internationalization from a Dialogical Perspective: A Responsibility of the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education

Internacionalização em Perspectiva Dialógica: uma Responsabilidade da Rede Federal de Educação Profissional, Científica e Tecnológica

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Samuel de Carvalho Lima
ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7145-3686>
Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e
Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Norte
E-mail: nome@email.com.br

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Abstract

This paper aims to characterize internationalization as a responsibility of the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education. My theoretical assumptions are based on the concept of dialogical subject, the Brazilian conceptual basis for Professional Education, and internationalization as a complex and changing process. My methodological choices led me to do an interpretative dialogical analysis of IFRN institutional documents, highlighting how they characterize internationalization. My analysis makes a claim for internationalization interrelating it with integral education, research, extension, management, the capillaries of the federal network, and social impact.

Keywords: Internationalization. Professional Education. Integral Education. TVET. Dialogical Research.

Resumo

Este artigo objetiva caracterizar a internacionalização como uma responsabilidade da Rede Federal de Educação Profissional, Científica e Tecnológica. Meus pressupostos teóricos são baseados na concepção de sujeito dialógico, na base conceitual brasileira sobre a Educação Profissional e na internacionalização como um processo complexo e em transformação. Minhas escolhas metodológicas me levaram a realizar uma análise dialógica interpretativista de documentos institucionais do IFRN, explicitando como eles caracterizam a internacionalização. Minha análise reivindica a internacionalização inter-relacionando-a com a educação integral, a pesquisa, a extensão, a gestão, a capilaridade da rede federal e o impacto social.

Palavras-chave: Internacionalização. Educação Profissional. Educação Integral. TVET. Pesquisa Dialógica.

1 INTRODUCTION

As I want to do research from a dialogical perspective, I believe it is essential to explain that I assume language as a social practice (BAKHTIN, 2016; VOLÓCHINOV, 2018). From this standpoint, I understand language as discursive interaction interrelated to a set of organized signs. Discursive interaction is achieved through concrete utterances/texts oriented to the other. Consequently, 1) any text is a response to previous texts; 2) any text is addressed to a subject (presumed response); 3) any text has a subject/author; 4) any text has an axiological relation to its subject/author. Thus, I understand this paper¹ as a coherent set of signs that constitutes a link in academic discursive interaction about internationalization, responding to previous texts on which I agree or disagree. In the same way, I address it to other teachers and administrative staff of Professional and Technological Education – also known internationally as Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) – interested in the discussion about the internationalization processes in education.

It is important to note that the theme of internationalization in Brazilian education is very recent, as highlighted by Clarissa Neves and Maria Barbosa. In their paper, the authors make explicit reference to the theme “internationalization of universities”² as a recent phenomenon over the last few years (NEVES; BARBOSA, 2020, p. 144). Even when there is a more consolidated internationalization process in Brazilian university contexts, it may be related to internationalization models that are not focused on international solidarity, as observed by Finardi, Sembiente, Amorim and Veronez (2020). In this scenario, learning from Ciavatta (2019, p. 31) the need to “exercise critical historical thinking about the genesis of the reality in which we are immersed”³, this paper aims to characterize internationalization as a responsibility of the Federal Network for Professional, Scientific and Technological Education.

In addition to this introduction, this paper has three more sections. In the next section, I present the theoretical assumptions based on the concept of dialogical subject, the Brazilian conceptual basis for Professional Education, and internationalization as a complex and changing process. Then, I present my methodological choices, which led me to do an interpretative dialogical analysis of the institutional documents of the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Rio Grande do Norte, highlighting how they characterize internationalization. Finally, I conclude the text with a discussion of internationalization in view of the local situation, which can also be regarded as a demonstration of internationalization from a dialogical perspective in the Federal Network for Professional, Scientific and Technological Education.

¹ English language was proofread by Mr. Cilian Buckley - Bachelor of Engineering (University College Cork).

² Original: “internacionalização das universidades”.

³ Original: “exercício do pensamento histórico crítico sobre a gênese da realidade onde estamos imersos”.

2 THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS

The dialogical assumption convinces me in relation to the possibility of understanding the human experience in the world and, for this reason, I resort to Bakhtinian dialogical epistemology to discuss the concept of subject as meaning makers, which is only possible through dialogue, to the detriment of experiences with monological and anti-democratic tendencies. In other words, regardless of the field of human activity in which I participate, I try to fight monological attempts, as they reveal authoritarianism, conservatism and asymmetrical social relations that generate violence and threaten the existence of those least favored.

In Brazil, Brait (2016) argues for a dialogical theory of discourse based on the set of Bakhtin and the Circle's work which presents a body of concepts that can specify the dialogical approach in relation to the object of study, the methodology and the researcher. As Sheila Grillo points out, the dialogical epistemology rejects the legacy of positivist and idealistic approaches. Particularly "It is in the dialogue, on the one hand of the researcher and his or her theory with, on the other, his or her speaking object that is the epistemological foundation of the theory of Bakhtin and his Circle"⁴ (GRILLO, 2012, p. 237). Grillo (2012) highlights the three perspectives that integrate the understanding of dialogical subject: the responsive, responsible, and inconclusive subject (ethical philosophy); the author-creator of utterances, that is the author has an active axiological relationship with texts in discursive interaction (literary aesthetics); the subject and his or her position in the social hierarchy (sociology). Thus, the concept of dialogical subject refuses the possibility of neutral observation of the object in Human Science studies, that is, the text, considered in a broad sense: "thoughts about thoughts, experiences of the experiences, words about words, texts about texts"⁵ (BAKHTIN, 2016, p. 71-72). Consequently, if I am convinced that the dialogism is a constitutive element of language, I must assume the dialogue in a broad sense:

dialogue, in the strict sense of the word, is only one of the forms of discursive interaction, despite being the most important. However, dialogue can be understood more broadly not only as direct loud face-to-face communication between people, but as any discursive communication, regardless of type (VOLÓCHINOV, 2018, p. 219)⁶.

Finally, the dialogical epistemology convinces me to adopt a perspective of language as social practice, realized by subjects that are historically situated, socially organized, and ideologically positioned. Therefore, when I consider the interrelationship between subject, language, education and society, I advocate that the dialogical perspective of language should be adopted by (language) teachers in Brazil, a society whose educational project needs to provide young people and adults with

⁴ Original: "É no diálogo, por um lado, do pesquisador e sua teoria com, por outro, seu objeto falante que está o fundamento epistemológico da teoria de Bakhtin e seu Círculo".

⁵ Original: "pensamentos sobre pensamentos, vivências das vivências, palavras sobre palavras, textos sobre textos".

⁶ Original: "o diálogo, no sentido estrito da palavra, é somente uma das formas da interação discursiva, apesar de ser a mais importante. No entanto, o diálogo pode ser compreendido de modo mais amplo não apenas como a comunicação direta em voz alta entre pessoas face a face, mas como qualquer comunicação discursiva, independentemente do tipo".

“both the right of access to historically constructed knowledge and to professionalization that allows them to act in the world of work and in the production of their existence, constituting themselves as contributions to social justice in the full sense”⁷ (SA; MOURA; HENRIQUE, 2020, p. 19).

When I integrate the Brazilian conceptual basis for Professional Education in this discussion, I also refer to a recent interview with Gaudêncio Frigotto, which provokes me to reflect on the education that is received by the sons and daughters of the working class (ALMEIDA; GOUVEIA, 2020). Frigotto specifically discusses the concept of the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education, and invites educators to make a permanent assessment of this educational project, because, regardless of its contradictions, it presents greater social and cultural gains than setbacks, an opinion on which I agree.

In the direction of self-assessment and self-criticism, Souza, Nunes and Oliveira (2020) aimed to analyze the contributions that the dissertations of the Graduate Program in Professional and Technological Education (ProfEPT) bring to professional education, regarding integral education. Considering the Federal Institute of Rio Grande do Norte (IFRN) and the first 22 dissertations published between 2019 and 2020 as a methodological choice, the study of the authors pointed to a positive impact in relation to integral education in a very explicit way. In addition, the study also showed that the dissertations present relationships with integrated secondary education and research as a formative principle. Thus, it is possible to perceive the interrelationship between Sa, Moura and Henrique’s reflections, Frigotto’s interview and Souza, Nunes and Oliveira’s research, texts that show dialogical approximation through their positive evaluation of the impacts of the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education projects, as well as their political defense for the transformation of Brazilian society, through public, free, democratic and quality education.

Nevertheless, when I seek for the discussion on internationalization in education in Brazil, most of the debate focuses on internationalization process in universities. According to Knight (2020), internationalization is a complex and changing process, which must respect the context, culture, priorities, and local history. The author focuses the discussion specifically on the internationalization of higher education. Neves and Barbosa assess this phenomenon referring to the context of Brazilian universities

There is a long way, therefore, to be followed by Brazilian universities towards internationalization at the national level and proactive insertion in the global scenario. The greater or lesser success will depend on the adequate coordination of public policies and institutional disposition in the definition of priorities and the relevant funding instruments.⁸ (NEVES; BARBOSA, 2020, p. 169).

⁷ Original: “tanto o direito de acesso ao conhecimento historicamente construído como a uma profissionalização que lhe permita atuar no mundo do trabalho e na produção de sua existência, constituindo-se como contributos para a justiça social em sentido pleno”.

⁸ Original: Há um longo caminho, portanto, a ser trilhado pelas universidades brasileiras no sentido de internacionalização em nível nacional e de inserção proativa no cenário global. O maior ou menor sucesso dependerá da adequada coordenação de políticas públicas e disposição institucional na definição de prioridades e dos instrumentos de fomento pertinentes.

Even though Brazil has specific features of the internationalization processes acknowledged by the authors, limitations are pointed out: internationalization made predominantly by graduate students and research groups; internationalization actions at home are beginning to emerge. In Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education, although I recognize some systematic attempts to approach the theme (COELHO, 2018), I find out that, in this context, the internationalization is a process that “has been little studied”⁹ (SILVA; MOREIRA; CAMILO, 2019, p. 465). Recognizing this challenge, Silva, Moreira and Camilo describe practices carried out at IFRN with a view to the internationalization of professional education, understanding internationalization as transversal actions to teaching, research and extension. The following actions are exemplified by the authors, respectively: technical education based on English as a means of instruction; students' perception of internationalization; action to stimulate interculturality.

Stallivieri, Schmitz, Ritter and Bordin (2019, p. 60) deal with internationalization from an administrative perspective. The authors explain their interests, namely, “providing managers with a reflection on the current situation of the internationalization of the Federal Network, so that, from there, they can develop articulated strategies with a view to strengthening the internationalization process”¹⁰. The authors approach internationalization in the Federal Institutes (IF) through the dialogue with the International Relations Forum (FORINTER) of the National Council of Institutions of the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education (Conif), a fundamental choice to be acknowledged. In addition, the investigation favors reflections and provocations to institutional actions, as it ends up revealing the development of modest internationalization actions in the network and, in some cases, worrisome in administrative terms, as one third of the 24 surveyed institutions point out that there is only one person responsible for all the internationalization actions of his or her institution.

Also from an administrative perspective, Lima (2018) investigates IFRN internationalization process. For this, the author uses indicators to classify the internationalization stage of the institution. Considering a) explicit internationalization in the institutional mission, b) representative for International Affairs, c) physical structure, d) human resources, e) specific financial resources, f) portal or web page of the international sector as indicators, the study points to less than 50% compliance with the indicators. Faced with a challenging scenario, Lima (2018) suggested an administrative restructuring in International Affairs office at IFRN (ASERI): a shift from the Dean of Extension (PROEX) so that internationalization can coordinate administratively with other sectors of the institution, such as the Dean of Education (PROEN), the Dean of Research (PROPI), among others.

Although I recognize the contribution of these perspectives that map and defend internationalization in the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education, I highlight the absence of an explicit dialogue between these texts and the Brazilian conceptual basis for professional education. This fact leads me to question: 1) What are the concepts of subject, language, education, and society that

⁹ Original: “tem sido pouco estudado”.

¹⁰ Original: “fornecer, aos gestores, uma reflexão sobre o atual quadro da internacionalização da Rede Federal, para que, a partir daí, possam desenvolver estratégias articuladas com vistas ao fortalecimento do processo de internacionalização”.

guide the investigative practices of their research? 2) What project for society do they defend through their texts? An assessment of these questions goes beyond the scope of this paper, but the open, public, and democratic debate among researchers on this topic can promote the alignment of an integrative project that strengthens the internationalization of education in the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education, considering its specificities. In doing so, we can address the challenging issue of how to integrate internationalization with integral education, so that we do not fall into neoliberalism strategies, which insist on commodifying education. Before taking the first steps in this direction, however, it is necessary to exercise critical thinking about the social reality in which I take part, to give visibility to how IFRN already characterizes internationalization in institutional terms so that, subsequently, I can be able to try to promote transformations towards more inclusive internationalization processes. In the next section, I present the methodological choices that guided me to discuss internationalization from a dialogical perspective.

3 METHODOLOGICAL CHOICES

When I assume the interest in doing dialogical research, I understand that the structural separation between a theoretical foundation and methodological choices responds exclusively to socially established demands by the scientific community. That said, I now present the research context, the research corpus, and the data analysis criteria in this study.

The research context is my workplace, that is, the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Rio Grande do Norte (IFRN). In it, I work as a teacher in a variety of levels, namely: secondary education integrated to the youth and adult; teacher training for Mathematics; Specialization course in Education and Contemporaneity; Master's in Teaching (POSENSINO); Master's in Professional and Technological Education (ProfEPT) – considering the courses taught in 2020. In addition, I have been the responsible for the International Affairs (ASERI) since December 2020, which motivated me to read and write texts on the theme of internationalization in the federal network, little explored, as previously evidenced in the Brazilian literature on the topic.

That said, the research corpus consists of six documents produced collectively and democratically by the local academic community. The documents are the Political-Pedagogical Project; the Institutional Development Plan 2014-2018; the Institutional Development Plan 2019-2026; the Didactic Organization; the Internal Rules of the Rector; the Management Report 2019. These documents were chosen not only because they guide and regulate politically, pedagogically, and administratively the institution and its actors, but also because they constitute a basic reading to develop an understanding of what internationalization is when I carry out the exercise of discussing it from a dialogical perspective.

In relation to the data analysis criteria, I chose to carry out an interpretative dialogical analysis, in the sense that “the researcher has to use his or her ability to make judgments about the data and choose those that best illustrate his or her

interpretation, being clear, therefore, that the data reflect his or her *interpretation*¹¹ (MOITA LOPES, 1994, p. 336, italics in the original). Anchored in Rohling (2014), I am convinced that, in dialogical research, there is always a permeability of the researcher's convictions and experiences in the procedure of selecting, constituting, and analyzing a given study object. Thus, I present my interpretation of the documents to explain how they characterize internationalization. In view of the dialogical perspective of language, I highlight the following elements/procedures: (1) in linguistic terms, the expression *international* and its derivatives (*international relations*, *internationalization*) guide me towards the selection of excerpts from the documents that I bring for analysis and illustration, as it ends up being possible to catch other expressions with which internationalization is more immediately related, pointing to its characteristics in the text; (2) in enunciative terms, the texts consist of six documents produced collectively and democratically by ethical subjects who participate in the academic community of Rio Grande do Norte, through committees that integrate teachers and administrative staff, students and representatives of civil society. In this sense, the members of the committees meet and, together, are responsible for producing basic texts (drafts and protocols), which go to larger collegiate bodies, culminating in the approval of deliberations by the institution's Superior Council (Consup). (3) In discursive terms, I assume that there are dialogical relationships between all the texts produced and that, in this specific case, the texts are constituted by discourses that dispute meanings to regulate the institution with a normative power. Thus, my analysis points to internationalization from a dialogical perspective, interrelating it with academic demands, namely: teaching, research, extension – already discussed by Silva, Moreira and Camilo (2019) – and administration – already discussed by Lima (2018), integrating both perspectives.

4 A DEMONSTRATION FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION FROM A DIALOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

By adopting a dialogical perspective to discuss internationalization as experiences in the field of education, I understand that the world of theory is inseparable from the world of immediate life experience. At the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Rio Grande do Norte (IFRN), internationalization is identified as a macro-process whose strategic objective is to “expand internationalization activities in conjunction with academic demands”¹², as explained by the last management report approved by the institution (IFRN, 2020, p. 40). The management unit for strategic projects related to this macro process is the International Affairs office (ASERI), which is part of the Dean of Extension (PROEX). Its competence refers to the promotion of “exchange relations and cooperation agreements with national and international institutions”¹³, following agreements and projects involving foreign institutions and advising the Dean of Extension and the Rector in communication with international institutions, as prescribed in the Internal

¹¹ Original: “resta ao pesquisador usar sua capacidade de fazer julgamentos sobre os dados e escolher aqueles que melhor ilustrem sua interpretação, estando claro, portanto, que os dados refletem sua *interpretação*”.

¹² Original: “ampliar as atividades de internacionalização em articulação com as demandas acadêmicas”.

¹³ “relações de intercâmbio e acordos de cooperação com instituições nacionais e internacionais”.

Rules of the Rectory (IFRN, 2011, p. 12-13), which allows me to interrelate ASERI management unit to the responsibility of the macro process identified in the management report. Silva, Moreira and Camilo (2019, p. 168) also explain this relationship, when they state that “ASERI is one of the main articulators of the conception, development and evaluation of IFRN international relations policy”¹⁴.

In my evaluation, ASERI administrative management reflects the transversality of internationalization actions with the aim of streamlining the training process and expanding scientific, technological, and sociocultural knowledge, as described by IFRN Political-Pedagogical Project, when it punctuates international experiences (IFRN, 2012a). In other words, international relations go through activities related to teaching, research and innovation, extension – reflecting the inseparability between them in integral education – as well as related to people management, refracting an institutional development policy for social impact. However, when relating internationalization to people management, the documents are still vigorously restricted to the concept of international mobility. Hereafter, I explain the relationship between internationalization and each institutional responsibility, based on the dialogue between the documents, which led me, even, to prepare a report that demands a restructuring of International Affairs of IFRN, as it has been argued by Lima (2018), since the sector, currently, portrays precisely the problematic characteristic revealed by Stallivieri, Schmitz, Ritter and Bordin’s study, that is, that there is only one person responsible for all the internationalization actions of the institution. In addition, restructuring can be defended by the campuses, since it would imply the creation of a local representation for internationalization affairs – also advocated by Lima (2018) – and by other institutions in the federal network that face similar administrative challenges, which is why my analysis flirts with characteristics of a demonstration, as evidenced in the title of this section.

In relation to teaching, internationalization is constitutive of the conception of undergraduate higher education and of the conception and principles of postgraduate higher education. In undergraduate higher education and, more particularly, in higher technology (or technological undergraduate) courses, internationalization provides the opportunity for international experiences – academic mobility, technical-scientific events – and the expansion of international relations (IFRN, 2019; IFRN, 2012a). As it can be seen, this understanding relies on the interrelationship between the Political-Pedagogical Project and the Institutional Development Plan 2019-2026, which complement each other in the same direction.

In postgraduate higher education, international relations gain greater specificity. The interrelationship between the Political-Pedagogical Project and the Didactic Organization enables this detail, since they characterize internationalization as: academic presentations at international scientific events; academic-scientific and cultural production in international journals; establishment of partnerships and agreements with international institutions; encouraging the mobility of teachers and students for international academic exchange; teacher participation in international events; explicit didactic organization with convention and agreements and academic-scientific exchange at the international level (IFRN, 2012a; IFRN, 2012b).

¹⁴ Original: “A ASERI é uma das principais articuladoras da concepção, do desenvolvimento e da avaliação da política de relações internacionais do IFRN”.

In relation to research and innovation, internationalization is constitutive of the guidelines and methodological indicators of research, scientific development and technological innovation, and technical-scientific and technological production and communication. In this sense, international relations are linked to the impacts on the systematization of internal scientific production and the expansion of mechanisms for publishing scientific papers, as they relate to journals at the international level (IFRN, 2012a). In this way, the Institutional Development Plan 2019-2026 interrelates with the Political-Pedagogical Project to reinforce the need for scientific activities that seek to foster the international academic mobility of researchers, with the aim of strengthening the internationalization of research projects and innovation, in addition to promoting the internationalization of research actions, with a view to expanding cooperation to carry out joint actions at the level of projects, programs, publications, among others (IFRN, 2019).

In addition, the Institutional Development Plan 2019-2026 explains the need to understand internationalization as an institutional responsibility for fostering international partnerships with a view to technical-scientific and technological production and communication to guarantee the strengthening of graduate programs, considering the need to carry out actions, whether in post-doctoral research, in sandwich undergraduate/graduate courses or in graduate programs (IFRN, 2019). In this case, the document guides the institution to foster international cooperation programs and/or to increase teachers and administrative staff's degree at the master's and doctoral level, as well as to support IFRN scientific journals in the search for indexing them in international databases and the "translation of papers (into English) for publication in international journals, with a view to increasing the number of citations of the institution's researchers at the international level"¹⁵ (IFRN, 2019, p. 93).

In relation to extension, internationalization is constitutive of actions that aim to foster the partnership with international institutions, seeking to expand the relationship with international organizations through exchange programs for students, teachers, and administrative staff. In addition, international relations seek to impact extension and technological development, as described in the Institutional Development Plan IFRN 2019-2026, through

projects for the application of applied research for the development and improvement of products and processes, as well as the provision of services, which can be carried out in partnership with public or private institutions, national and international, with an application interface in the productive world (IFRN, 2019, p. 96)¹⁶.

In the case of the extension, internationalization can be characterized by an interrelation between excerpts from different sections of the same document since it brings up the concern with technological development and the application of applied research. In other words, the extension responds to research and innovation, claiming

¹⁵ Original: "tradução de artigos (para língua inglesa) para publicação em periódicos internacionais, tendo em vista elevar o número de citações dos pesquisadores da instituição em nível internacional".

¹⁶ Original: "projetos de aplicação de pesquisa aplicada para o desenvolvimento e aperfeiçoamento de produtos e processos, bem como da prestação de serviços, que podem ser realizados em parceria com instituições públicas ou privadas, nacionais e internacionais, com interface de aplicação no mundo produtivo".

a similar agenda, which makes the institution reaffirm the understanding of the inseparability between teaching, research, and extension. I also emphasize that these interrelations favor the understanding of integral education, claimed by the Brazilian conceptual basis for Professional Education, and that is why I highlight the need to consider integral education in the debate on the internationalization of education.

In relation to people management, it is worth mentioning the policy to promote the training of teachers and administrative staff in graduate programs and in the establishment of international agreements and exchanges, “in connection with institutional development and with academic and administrative demands”¹⁷, as established by the Institutional Development Plan 2014-2018 (IFRN, 2016, p. 141). In historical perspective, this document is interrelated with all the others, as the fulfillment of its prescriptions has built the basis on which the institution can assess itself and plan its subsequent development.

In view of the way internationalization is evidenced in IFRN documents, I realize that the institution's international relations are diluted in actions from different sectors that end up taking responsibility for internationalization in a specific way, within its limits. In this sense, so that this fluidity does not weaken an explicit project of internationalization for social impact and constitutes, in fact, a transversal process, I defend internationalization from a dialogical perspective. In this perspective, ASERI, as a management unit, needs to become a catalyst for internationalization in dialogue with other sectors. Unlike centralization, internationalization from a dialogical perspective favors and respects the organization of the institution, fosters the institution internationalization policy, and strengthens the development of its projects, in a movement of coming and going, in action on the border between sectors. In other words, international relations should be coordinated with other sectors and the activities developed in them, establishing partnerships so that their processes favor the promotion of integral education. The sectors, within the scope of the IFRN, with which ASERI can establish a necessary relationship, considering the interpretative dialogical analysis of institutional documents, are the Dean of Education (PROEN), the Dean of Research and Innovation (PROPI), the Dean of Extension (PROEX), the Dean People Management (DIGPE), the Dean of Planning and Institutional Development (PRODES).

In addition to interrelating integral education, research, extension and management, internationalization from a dialogical perspective must consider the capillaries of the Federal Network for Professional, Scientific and Technological Education. The network's capillaries are a contemporary social reality with the potential to combat what Moura and Lima Filho (2017, p. 111) recognize as “a new phase of radicalization of neoliberalism, which aims to strike a blow against the poorest working class in the country, achieved by inclusive public policies of the first two decades of this century”¹⁸. Thus, reflecting on this characteristic of the network is essential to understand internationalization as one responsibility of the Federal Network for Professional, Scientific and Technological Education, with the potential to promote greater regional social impacts. In this debate, to give visibility to the voice of the

¹⁷ Original: “em vinculação com o desenvolvimento institucional e com as demandas acadêmicas e administrativas”.

¹⁸ Original: “uma nova fase de radicalização do neoliberalismo, que visa perpetrar um golpe contra a classe trabalhadora mais pobre do País, alcançada pelas políticas públicas inclusivas das duas primeiras décadas deste século”.

teachers and administrative staff who are not working in capital cities or in large urban centers or in management positions, becomes a commitment to internationalization from a dialogical perspective, since these educators are agents of systematic social transformation due to the role they play daily in their profession in cities that have been positively impacted by the presence of an IF campus, thanks to the capillaries of the federal network. Thus, it is necessary to monitor and evaluate the internationalization processes that are already being carried out on the various campuses that impact the local society. This monitoring is possible through dialogue between responsive, responsible subjects, giving visibility to the voice of those who integrate education and society.

I therefore advocate an urgent review of the understanding of internationalization and its actions that promote asymmetric, individual, or sporadic cooperation and weak institutional participation. It is important to fight the understanding of internationalization that is restricted to a few actors who, without infrastructure, produce poorly publicized results, with a one-way, no-return movement, and an exclusive focus on research, with little or no return from those who even receive funding to carry out their activities. The beginning of the third decade of the 21st century brings new social, health and economic challenges, and with them, new understandings about the impact of internationalization in education. This requires the maturation of concepts, a possible reduction of agreements with better definition and with higher quality projects, evaluated through concrete results for social and regional development.

Finally, it is essential that the IFRN, in view of its social mission in the state of Rio Grande do Norte and its national visibility, moves towards internationalization curriculum processes, internationalization at home, comprehensive internationalization, virtual internationalization, which consider the digital generation, the use of technologies, and develops its own perspective in relation to Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0, understandings brought by Stallivieri (2021). Likewise, in a comprehensive manner, the internationalization of the Federal Network for Professional, Scientific and Technological Education must constitute an institutional responsibility for fostering international partnerships to develop regional potentials, generate knowledge and produce social impact in a dialogical, democratic, systemic process that gives visibility to the voices from different campuses, respecting their particularities. In the context of Brazilian universities, Finardi, Sembiante, Amorim and Veronez (2020, p. 606) believe that “[...] it is time to listen to the voices of the Global South. Voices that recognize and acknowledge the power of the Global North, but also value local knowledges and the potential of the Global South”. I not only agree with the authors, but I also reinforce the need to integrate the capillaries of the Federal Network for Professional, Scientific and Technological Education in this debate.

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