



Alfa tuning Latin America project: the relationship between elaboration and implementation in participating Brazilian universities

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ABSTRACT. This article discusses the implementation of the Alfa Tuning Latin America Project, and if – and in what way – its guidelines were incorporated in the context of the practice of participating universities. The theoretical reference of the article is based on the policy cycle (Bowe & Ball, 1992) and the socioeconomic context of the capitalist mode of production (Harvey, 2013), to understand the relationship between The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project and its contexts of influence, elaboration and practice. The methodology was based on the analysis of official documents and reports of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project and on semi-structured interviews. The results showed that The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project is part of territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization of higher education policies in the European Union, which surpasses national borders to meet market demands in the current scenario of multi-scalar governance. In Brazil, The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project was introduced outside the regulatory frameworks of the State, being agreed upon from political networks between teachers and universities, and the implementation of its proposals occurred in a punctual and discursive way, however The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project can influence national policies through adoption of concepts, diagnoses and methodologies, as well as to legitimize other policies, especially for advocating a curriculum organized in competencies.

Keywords: higher education, multi-scalar governance, European union, global policy.

Projeto alfa *tuning* América Latina: entre a elaboração e a implementação nas universidades brasileiras participantes

RESUMO. Este artigo discute a implementação do projeto Alfa *Tuning* América Latina (Patal) no Brasil, bem como se, e de que maneira, suas diretrizes foram incorporadas ao contexto da prática das universidades participantes. O referencial teórico está fundamentado no ciclo de políticas (Bowe & Ball, 1992) e no contexto socioeconômico do modo de produção capitalista (Harvey, 2013), de forma a compreender a relação do Patal com seus contextos de influência, elaboração e prática. A metodologia baseou-se na análise dos documentos e relatórios oficiais do Patal e na realização de entrevistas semiestruturadas com participantes do Patal no Brasil. Os resultados evidenciaram que o Patal faz parte das ações de territorialização, desterritorialização e reterritorialização de políticas de educação superior da União Europeia, que superam fronteiras nacionais a fim de suprir demandas de mercado no cenário de governança multiescalar. No Brasil, o Patal foi introduzido fora dos marcos regulatórios do Estado, sendo acordado a partir de redes políticas entre docentes e universidades, e a implementação de suas diretrizes ocorreu, predominantemente, de forma pontual e discursiva, todavia o Patal pode influir nas políticas nacionais por meio da adoção de conceitos, diagnósticos e metodologias, bem como legitimar outras políticas, especialmente por defender um curriculum organizado em competências.

Palavras-chave: educação superior, governança multiescalar, união europeia, política global.

Proyecto alfa *tuning* américa latina: entre la elaboración y la implementación en las universidades brasileñas participantes

RESUMEN. Este artículo discute la implementación del proyecto Alfa *Tuning* América Latina en Brasil, así como si, y de qué manera, sus directrices fueron incorporadas al contexto de la práctica de las universidades participantes. El referencial teórico está fundamentado en el ciclo político (Bowe & Ball, 1992) y en el contexto socioeconómico del modo de producción capitalista (Harvey, 2013), para comprender la relación del proyecto Alfa *Tuning* América Latina con sus contextos de influencia, elaboración y práctica. La

metodología se basó en el análisis de los documentos e informes oficiales del proyecto Alfa *Tuning* América Latina y en la realización de entrevistas semiestructuradas con participantes del proyecto Alfa *Tuning* América Latina en Brasil. Los resultados evidenciaron que el proyecto Alfa *Tuning* América Latina hace parte de las acciones de territorialización, desterritorialización y reterritorialización de políticas de educación superior de la Unión Europea, que superan fronteras nacionales para suplir demandas de mercado en el escenario de gobernanza multiescalar. En Brasil, el proyecto Alfa *Tuning* América Latina fue introducido fuera de los marcos reguladores del Estado, siendo acordado a partir de redes políticas entre docentes y universidades, y la implementación de sus directrices ocurrió, predominantemente, de forma puntual y discursiva, no obstante el proyecto Alfa *Tuning* América Latina puede influir en las políticas nacionales por medio de la adopción de conceptos, diagnósticos y metodologías, así como legitimar otras políticas, especialmente por defender un currículum organizado en competencias.

Palabras-clave: educación superior, gobernanza multiescalar, unión europea, política global.

Introduction

The text presents research results that analyze the process of implementation of the Alfa *Tuning* Latin America project in Brazil, more precisely if, and in what way, The ALFA *Tuning* Latin America Project guidelines were incorporated in the context of the practice of the participating Brazilian universities (Puziol, 2017).

The ALFA *Tuning* Latin America Project, according to official documents, is a proposition to tune¹, compare and recognize Latin American higher education from European curricular references: a methodology based on the notion of competences and the formation of networks of learning communities (Beneitone et al., 2007). Developed in two phases, the first between 2004 and 2007 and the second between 2011 and 2014, The ALFA *Tuning* Latin America Project covered 19 Latin American countries, was funded by the European Commission and coordinated by the University of Deusto, Spain and the University of Groningen, Netherlands (Beneitone et al., 2007).

The theoretical framework used to analyze The ALFA *Tuning* Latin America Project was based on the policy cycle and the socioeconomic context of the capitalist mode of production, based mainly on the following authors: Bowe and Ball (1992) and Harvey (2013). The ALFA *Tuning* Latin America Project analysis methodology was based on the study of official documents and reports of the project in Latin America (Beneitone et al., 2007; López et al., 2014) and also in semi-structured interviews with teachers from participating universities, considering Brazil as an empirical cut.

Thus, the article is divided into three parts. The first presents The ALFA *Tuning* Latin America Project and its main characteristics. The second discusses its contexts of influence and elaboration, in order to highlight the economic, political and social

bases that are part of the project's foundation. And the third discusses the context of The ALFA *Tuning* Latin America Project practice, presenting the results of the implementation process are presented in the participating Brazilian universities.

Alfa *Tuning* Latin America Project: tuning of higher education

The Alfa *Tuning* Latin America Project is a proposal of global scope² that aims, according to official document, to produce a space for reflection and a set of actions that provide the competitiveness, comparability and compatibility of Latin American higher education, with reference to European higher education (Beneitone et al., 2007; López et al., 2014). From thematic areas (business administration, agronomy, architecture, law, education, nursing, civil engineering, physics, social innovation, geology, history, mathematics, medicine, psychology and chemistry), The ALFA *Tuning* Latin America Project tries to "[...] boost the construction and consolidation of the Common Space of Higher Education of the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean (UEALC)³" (Beneitone et al., 2007, p. 38).

The ALFA *Tuning* Latin America Project, one of the 51 projects of the Latin America - Academic Training (ALFA⁴), is defined as a network of learning communities and a methodology (called tuning). The network of learning communities, according to official document, expresses the connection between teachers and students, in order to promote discussions and reflections on the problems of higher education and generate ideas to be shared globally (López et al., 2014). The network of learning communities should be created through

¹ The verb to tune is used by the ALFA *Tuning* Latin America Project as a reference to a musical orchestra that needs all instruments tuned for convergence and all are on the same frequency

² In addition to the ALFA *Tuning* Latin America Project there are also: *Tuning* Europe, *Tuning* USA, *Tuning* Asia, *Tuning* Africa, *Tuning* Ukraine, *Tuning* Russia, *Tuning* Australia, *Tuning* Kazakhstan and *Tuning* Georgia.

³ All the translations presented in the article were made by the authors.

⁴ The Alfa program is one of the actions of the Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, which aims to promote cooperation between Latin American and European higher education institutions in the field of economic and social development.

The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project and be expanded to promote the convergence of higher education at different scales (López et al., 2014). The network is made up of teachers participating in The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, linked to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), who became responsible for developing the tuning methodology in undergraduate courses.

The tuning methodology is composed of three axes and their respective lines of action, which aim to compare and recognize Latin American higher education internally and in its correlation with Europe. The goal is to promote changes in the structure and content of higher education (Beneitone et al., 2007). Below is a summary of the methodology.

Axes	Lines of Action
1. Elaboration of the profile of the course / diploma	1. Consider the economic and social, regional and global demands 2. Formulate a meta-profile of each thematic area based on general and specific competences 3. Reflect on future trends in the profession and society 4. Ponder on the specific mission of the university
2. Redesign of teaching programs	1. Elaboration of the Latin American Reference Credit ⁵ (Clar) - a unit of value that measures the amount of work, in hours, necessary to achieve the learning outcomes and the approval in the school year 2. Learning, teaching and assessment process by competences 3. Integrating Projects
3. Trajectory of the learner	1. Student-centered learning system – CLAR's measurement should also be centered on the student's work, not just the teacher's.

Figure 1. Summary of the methodological structure of the Alfa Tuning Latin America project.

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Beneitone et al. (2007).

The elaboration of the profile of the course and the redesign of the teaching programs based on the generic and specific competences are fundamental lines of action of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project. According to the official proposal, “[...] competences represent a dynamic combination of knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities” (Beneitone et al., 2007, p.37). In the development of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, a list of general and specific competences was made available, based on the competencies elaborated in the Tuning Educational Structures project in Europe⁶, so that the participants could investigate,

through questionnaires with teachers, students, graduates and employers, which competences most important and relevant to the training of professionals. In total, in the first and second phase, 23,854 questionnaires were answered, which were decisive in the definition of generic and specific competences for each area of knowledge.

In the first phase of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, between 2004 and 2007, the proposal was to create a space for reflection and debate on the tuning methodology and the second phase, between 2011-2014, the intention was to promote changes in the undergraduate courses of the participating universities, regarding the profile of the course/diploma and the teaching program. The first phase involved 200 teachers linked to 110 HEIs from 19 countries. The second phase involved 230 teachers linked to 186 HEIs from 18 countries. In Brazil, 19 teachers from 19 universities (16 public and 03 private non-profit) participated in the first phase, and 18 teachers from 12 universities (08 public and 04 private - 03 of them non-profit) participated in the second phase.

The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project has: a) General Coordination, composed by two professors of the Universities of Deusto and Groningen; b) Technical Center composed of three professors from the University of Deusto; c) Management Committee, composed of 12 European and Latin American HEI professors and 16 coordinators from the thematic areas of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project; and d) National Tuning Center, composed of one or two professors from each participating country. According to an official document, The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project was proposed from Latin American initiatives and the interested countries participated in a call made by the Alfa program (Beneitone et al., 2007). The selection of HEIs and professors for participation, according to the official proposal, took into account “[...] national excellence in the area they represent, ability to dialogue with people from other institutions working in the same subject, significant weight in the system (institution size, trajectory and academic authority)” (Beneitone et al., 2007, p.18).

In the first phase of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, five regional meetings were held to initiate the lines of action of the project. In the second phase, four meetings were held in order to deepen the lines of action and to promote changes in the thematic areas involved, in order to take the content of the discussions about the profile of the course/diploma and the teaching program into the

⁵ CLAR is “[...] a unit of value that estimates the workload, measured in hours, that the student needs to achieve learning outcomes and to be approved in a course or semester” (Latin American Reference Credit [CLAR], 2014, p. 30). CLAR is based on the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). After The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project meetings, considering the diversity of the Latin American calendars, two possibilities of correspondence between hours and credits were agreed: 1,440 hours/year = 60 credits/year = 24 hours/1 credit or 1,980 hours/year = 60 credits/year = 33 hours/1 credit (Beneitone et al., 2007).

⁶ Project aimed at the redesign and curriculum convergence in universities in Europe.

context of HEI practice through the actions of the teachers. The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, therefore, arose from a context of influence and elaboration that reveals some of its characteristics, as will be discussed next.

Contexts of influence and the elaboration of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project

The analysis of higher education with the help of the policy cycle makes it possible to understand the complex dynamics of the policy making and implementation process, in order to highlight the interrelationship and non-linearity of the contexts⁷ of policy influence, elaboration and practice, involving relations of power, domination and resistance (Bowe & Ball, 1992). It is within the context of policy influence that stakeholders strive to influence the definition and social effects of education, where “[...] fundamental political concepts are established [...], acquire credit, and provide discourse and lexicon for the initiation of politics” (Bowe & Ball, 1992, p.20⁸).

Related to the context of influence, it is in the context of the elaboration of the policy text, which involves public and private actions, in which official texts, documents, comments, formal and informal analyses, videos, speeches and public performances of authorities and politicians are produced (Bowe & Ball, 1992). And the context of practice is the arena in which the consequences of the policy text, reinterpretation and recontextualization take place. It is a context in which “it is often difficult, if not impossible to control or predict the effects of politics, or even be clear about what those effects are, what they mean, when they happen” (Bowe & Ball, 1992, p. 23⁹).

Thus, it is understood that the context of influence of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project is expressed by the scenario of structural and spatial-temporal adjustments since 1970 and by the changes in the functions of the State in the scope of multi-scale governance. It is understood that capital circulates and restructures continuously and permanently, moving through the territories over time and demanding, among other elements, social infrastructures that support and perpetuate its operation (Harvey, 2013). In this scenario, education is understood as a form of social infrastructure, since it can contribute to the sustenance of life and labor

in capitalism by producing technical and scientific knowledge, forming work force and performing ideological control (Dale, 2010; Harvey, 2013). Education responds in different ways to the economic, political and social conditionalities of each historical moment, depending on national characteristics and their relationships with global, regional, supranational and local scales of influence (Robertson, 2009).

The structural adjustments - neoliberalism, productive restructuring and financialization of capital - and the spatio-temporal adjustments - territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization - are the economic, political and social conditionalities born from the 1970s that keep capitalism functioning and influence education (Harvey, 2011, 2013). In the sphere of higher education, neoliberalism, in addition to rearrangement in the relationship between State and market, extending the powers of the latter, also deals with new values and subjectivities, in which individuals are inserted in the culture of individualism, merit and competition with air of freedom (Ball, 2012).

Productive restructuring is based on the flexibilization of the labor market and reveals an improvement in labor exploitation conditions, influencing the formation of competent and skillful individuals and groups who do not think but operate and adapt to the systemic constraints of capital (Alves, 2011). However, transformations in higher education resulting from structural adjustments do not occur within national boundaries, involving different actors in the processes of policy development and implementation. In this sense, the spatio-temporal adjustments - territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization - are the strategies of displacement of capitalism, in which national borders are transposed in the context of globalization (Puziol, 2017). Territorialization represents multiple actions of displacement and reallocation of physical or symbolic activities with economic, political, social, environmental or cultural purposes (Harvey, 2013).

In order to have territorialization, there are processes of deterritorialization, in which shifts of educational policies, for example, are carried out regionally or globally, transposing scales (Haesbaert, 2011). What deterritorializes, implies a reterritorialization, that is, a reallocation in another scale (Haesbaert, 2011). And such processes are intermediated by material or symbolic networks, which through poles and flows cross local, national, regional and global scales, with purposes, as in the case of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project,

⁷ Ball (1994), in later research, proposed the analysis of two other contexts: results and political strategies. However, due to the limits and cut of the research, these contexts were not analyzed.

⁸ Original text: “Key policy concepts are establish [...], they acquire currency and credence and provide a discourse and lexicon for policy initiation”.

⁹ Original text: “It is often difficult, if not impossible to control or predict the effects are, what they mean, when they happen”.

mainly economic.

In this context, the State continues to be relevant for the elaboration of educational policies. However, it divides the protagonism with a greater number of actors - markets, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, think tanks, regional blocs, consultants and entrepreneurs - configuring multi-scalar governance - global, national, regional, supranational and local (Dale, 2009, 2014).

This scenario has contributed to the deepening of processes of internationalization of higher education in which a conception of education as the motor of the knowledge economy has predominated (Dias Sobrinho, 2010). In the context of policy-making, the European Union, a regional economic bloc, has built a process of convergence of higher education in order to increase its competitiveness in the world scenario (via Bologna process and Tuning Educational Structures in Europe, for example) and has taken such a proposal beyond frontier boundaries, developing important global strategies “[...] in creating both ‘minds’ and ‘markets’ for the European knowledge economy” (Robertson, 2009, p. 408), such as, for example, through the Alfa Tuning Latin America project.

The European Union, with a conception of higher education based on a ‘neoliberal language of competitiveness’, has globally deterritorialized and reterritorialized education policies (Robertson, 2002). The notion of competences, “[...] ideological elaboration that explains the social question from the point of view of the individual subject” (Ramos, 2006, p. 19), has been one of the pillars of such policies and acquired a central role in curricula of graduation, even becoming the curriculum itself.

Taking up The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project in light of the above, it is considered that the content and structure of higher education in its proposal, constituted in the regional meetings of Latin America from European references, has characteristics that are inadequate to the context of Latin American universities.

For Dale (2009) and Angulo Rasco (2008), The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project proposes a redesign of educational programs that meet the Bologna process guidelines beyond European borders, in order to make education more efficient. According to Eiró and Catani (2011), The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project is focused on the performance of tasks directed to the productive sector. With regard to the centrality of competences, which are fundamental in The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, it is used the argument of Frigotto (2008, p. 71), who points to the notion of

competences as a redetermination of human capital, “[...] a notion that not only explains but above all disguises determinations of inequality between nations and between individuals and groups and social classes”.

According to Sacristán (2011), the competences are considered as a new language, used in a functional way in order to meet demands, mainly, economic ones. However, it is necessary to verify how The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project was implemented in the context of practice, since “[...] the analysis thus made of an ongoing movement does not prejudice absolutely forms and states of this movement in everyday reality” (Ropé & Tanguy, 1997, p. 20).

Context of practice: the implementation of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project

In the case of the implementation of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, the context of the practice is understood as the Brazilian universities participating in the project, which not only received the text of the policy, but reinterpreted and recontextualized according to the characteristics of the academic scenario. It is noteworthy, according to Bowe and Ball (1992, p. 22) that “Professionals do not confront political texts as naive readers; they come with their own histories, experiences, values and purposes [...]”¹⁰. For the authors, the interpretation of the text of the policy is an arena of dispute and, therefore, the meaning of the texts can not be controlled by the policy makers, since portions of the proposal can be excluded, misinterpreted and fragmented (Bowe & Ball, 1992).

The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project empirical analysis focused the research on the Brazilian participants of the second phase, based on the results expected in this phase by the proponents of the proposal. After contact with all 18 participating professors, the cut, from the availability of the same for interviews, was reduced to six participants added to the three coordinators of the National Tuning Center of Brazil. Thus, nine participants of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project in Brazil were interviewed¹¹ and six Pedagogical Projects were analyzed, according to the undergraduate courses to which the participating professors were linked. Six categories of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project analysis were elaborated from the content of the interviews - processing in Brazil, interpretations, relation with

¹⁰ Original text: “Practitioners do not confront policy texts as naive readers, they come with histories, experience, with values and purposes of their own [...]”.

¹¹ All interviews were conducted according to the determinations of the Ethics Committee of the University of São Paulo.

the conception of internationalization of higher education, contribution, difficulties in implementation and results. Through these categories, The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project was analyzed in the context of the practice of participating Brazilian universities.

Processing in Brazil

This category made it possible to analyze the insertion of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project in Brazil and in universities. According to the content of the interviews, the Secretariat of Higher Education of Brazil, a unit of the Ministry of Education (MEC), was contacted by the General Coordination of the University of Deusto to present the content of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project and the conditions of development; however, the Secretariat of Higher Education was unaware of Brazil's intention to be part of such a proposal. It was highlighted by some interviewees that after the presentation of the project, in a meeting in Brazil, the General Coordination of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project requested the support from the Secretariat of Higher Education for the execution of the proposal, which after an internal discussion resolved to follow the development of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, but without the adhesion of the Brazilian government (Puziol, 2017).

It was emphasized by some interviewees that the insertion of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project in Brazil did not have a seal from the Brazilian government, because it is not an external public policy between countries and is not agreed in the scope of the Summit of Heads of State and Government, establishing itself, therefore, as an initiative between universities. They affirmed that, even without the official participation of the Brazilian government, the Secretariat of Higher Education was the interlocutor of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project in the first phase, a role played by the National Commission for Higher Education Assessment in the second phase, and that Secretariat of Higher Education and National Commission for Higher Education Assessment, in both phases of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, people to coordinate the project in Brazil and to form the National Tuning Center (Puziol, 2017).

Regarding the selection of universities and professors for participation in The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, the interviewees reported that in the first phase there was greater concern with meeting the criteria established by the project -

diverse location in the national territory, national scientific relevance of the university and intellectual importance of the professor - and also with formal invitations to universities. Nevertheless, with the exit of some universities and professors at the end of the first phase, it was difficult to find participants for all areas, and it was necessary to informally invite other professors who fit The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project profile (Puziol, 2017).

After analyzing the empirical reality and the documents, it was noticed that in the report of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project (Beneitone et al., 2007) it was affirmed that there was a call in which the countries applied for a vacancy in the project, but according to the interviewees, The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project was submitted to Secretariat of Higher Education without prior discussion of Brazil's interest. However, even without the official participation of the Brazilian government, Secretariat of Higher Education and National Commission for Higher Education Assessment were interlocutors in the development of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project in the country, such as attending meetings and indicating people for the formation of the National Tuning Center.

Some of the interviewees affirmed that The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project has no seal from the Brazilian government and therefore cannot be considered as a public policy. But, the absence of a government seal did not prevent The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project from being executed in the country, referring to Ball's (2012) reflections on the current character of global education policies, in which educational projects are developed globally through political networks, without necessarily go through the regulatory and bureaucratic milestones of the states. Deterritorialization of educational policies occurs in a multi-scalar governance scenario (Dale, 2010) in which states do not formally channel the propositions, but opt for the networks that support them.

When verifying the role of Secretariat of Higher Education and National Commission for Higher Education Assessment in The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project process (even without the official participation of the Brazilian government), considering the narrative of the participants, it is observed that the transnational regulation pointed out by Barroso (2006) has relevance, that is, diagnoses, norms, techniques or discourses are elaborated by central nations, regional economic blocs or international organizations, and are externalized as successful models for peripheral countries. It is considered, as Wallerstein (2007)

analyzes, that European universalism continues to exert social, economic, political and cultural influence on other nations, in a constant rhetoric of power.

The representativeness of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project is another factor that emerged, since universities and professors were chosen unilaterally by the National Tuning Center. Thus, when considering the political representativeness discussed by Bobbio (2005), it is understood that such representativeness must be linked to the interests of a group and not only to individual purposes. Consequently, it is questioned whether the choice of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project participants by the National Tuning Center means that there is representativeness of the Brazilian higher education in its different areas of knowledge, as stated in The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project documents. As Nestor (2004) analyzes, there is a recurring practice of the European Union in conferring power where there is no legitimacy and promoting legitimacy where there is no power. Also, this would corroborate the lack of democratic principles in the development of educational policies (Antunes, 2006).

Interpretations

In this category, the information about The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project interpretations was analyzed. According to most of the interviewees, The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project is an opportunity for mutual knowledge on European and Latin American higher education, constituting a possibility of dialogue between different instances of policy formulation and educational management, which can provide the approximation between universities and markets and enable the validation of degrees, academic mobility and the identification of pedagogical problems. It was also pointed out that the tuning methodology was exported to Latin America because it generated satisfactory results in Europe, and competence education is its main point, which expresses an integral formation of the subject and not a methodological training, as its critics evaluate.

Some respondents stated that ALFA Tuning Latin America Project is not a project of market imposition linked to the Bologna process, since the subjects of Latin America could have voice in the process of elaboration and development of the proposal, not being configured as a neocolonial action of Europe towards the Latin American region. However, according to other interviewees, The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project is a

consequence of the Bologna process, position expressed by the General Coordination of the Project; and is also present in The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project report (Beneitone et al., 2007), and therefore one of objectives of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project is to provide labor for Europe in its crisis and population aging scenario by training creative professionals who are capable to solve problems and promote innovation.

It was possible to perceive that the interviewees point to The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project as a proposal of tuning for the Latin American and European higher education from the dialogue and the mutual construction of knowledge. However, it is important to consider that the European Union and the European Commission's activities in educational projects, including in The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, have not been cooperation, but rather the presentation of successful models and the encouragement of countries to adopt their methodologies in order to stimulate the knowledge society, in which science is mainly aligned with the demands of the economy (Antunes, 2006; Dale, 2009).

The analysis of the Tuning Educational Structures in Europe report (González & Wagenaar, 2003) shows that The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project methodological proposal, expressed in a document (Beneitone et al., 2007), is almost a copy of the European model. Although there is the narrative of the interviewees stating that The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project was developed in a cooperative way, the reports show the transposition from the European model to Latin America in order to expand, according to Aboites (2010), the influence of the market on universities and to stimulate the Common Space of Higher Education of the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean (UEALC). As analyzed by Antunes (2006), The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project is part of the Bologna process strategies, which by encouraging competition among institutions promote Europeanization that goes beyond traditional boundaries (Lima, Azevedo, & Catani, 2008).

Relation with the conception of internationalization of higher education

In this category, we analyzed information about the conception of internationalization of higher education and its relation with ALFA Tuning Latin America Project (Puziol, 2017). Most of the interviewees consider that the internationalization of higher education is essential in the current societal

scenario and, therefore, Brazil needs to be attentive to the possibilities of internationalization and consider the opportunities of building networks of knowledge offered by ALFA Tuning Latin America Project. Teacher and student mobility, for them, is related to the processes of internationalization and is one of the possible results of the convergence proposed by ALFA Tuning Latin America Project. The interviewees also stressed that ALFA Tuning Latin America Project is not an action for internationalization of higher education, but it is a process that can be inserted within the framework of external policies of the states (Puziol, 2017).

According to the content of the interviews, internationalization is indicated as a possibility to know and share other worldviews and to contribute to the cultural enrichment of the country and the individual, as well as to elaborate compatible academic credits and actions of mobility for teachers and students that respect the peculiarities of countries and their regions. For some interviewees, ALFA Tuning Latin America Project can contribute to the discussion about the internationalization of higher education in Brazil, not only with Europe, but with other countries such as Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS).

It was found that the interviewees presented an understanding of internationalization of higher education that coincides with that proposed by the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project. As in ALFA Tuning Latin America Project reports, interviewees assume internationalization as a universal trend to which Latin America has to integrate, linking it to the training of labor on a global scale, based on convergent guidelines developed by universities in partnership with the market, aiming at comparability, competitiveness and compatibility (Beneitone et al., 2007).

As for the academic mobility mentioned by the interviewees, it should be noted that the population of the 19 Latin American nations (608,409 million according to the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre - CELADE, 2015) which participated in the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project is larger than the population of the 28 countries that make up the European Union (510,056 million according to the Statistical Office of the European Communities - Eurostat, 2016). Such data cannot be analyzed in a deterministic way, but in the complex web of geopolitical relations between nations. Thereby, migration and the search for labor are elements to be considered in this process of convergence and encouragement of academic mobility, made by Europe. In 2015, it was the first time in the history of the European Union

that there was a negative vegetative growth, 5.1 million children were born and 5.2 million people died, although absolute growth is positive due to migrations. (Eurostat, 2016).

Contribution

In this category, information was analyzed regarding the Latin American Reference Credit (CLAR) (2014), indicated by the interviewees as The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project main contribution (Puziol, 2017). The interviewees pointed CLAR as a mechanism that can make comparability and compatibility between undergraduate courses in Latin America possible and although it has not been implemented in the practice of Brazilian universities, it can support future proposals of credit models.

For the interviewees, CLAR is an interesting proposal for suggesting the curricular organization based on credits and not from the time-load, as happens predominantly in Brazil. They emphasized that some elements of CLAR were taken to the National Council for Education of Brazil, mainly those related to the definition of credits centered on the activities of the student and not only the teacher, in order to contribute with the reflections on the revision of the curricular guidelines and the criteria for the organization of undergraduate courses. They also emphasized that in Brazil there have already been attempts to create strategies for student mobility that did not work and that CLAR could become a point of reference for this debate.

According to the interviewees, there was a meeting in Brazil for the presentation of CLAR for representatives of public and private HEIs and for the Council of Rectors of Brazilian Universities; however few people participated. It was pointed out the lack of financial resources as the main reason for not implementing CLAR.

It was possible to consider that even not implemented, CLAR can serve as a model for curricular reorganization actions, as pointed out by the interviewees. As Barroso (2006) analyzes, there is a slow and complex movement of transnational regulation, in which methodologies, techniques and diagnostics can promote conceptual and political contamination, which can be used to reterritorialize educational models and legitimize decisions in national settings (Robertson, 2002).

CLAR proposes the insertion of the student's study time in the measure of the credit of the subjects, justifying that the student has to be prepared for the time in the classroom; however does not question the causes of unpreparedness for

reflection and debate among students. There is no question about the students' socioeconomic and cultural conditions. As Sacristan (2011, 56) analyzes, "Sometimes artificial technical problems are created that conceal the real ones [...]", that is, the proposal of CLAR admits the reality as it is and proposes the resolution of the consequences of the problems and not of their causes.

Difficulties in the implementation

In this category, information about the difficulties in implementing The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project guidelines was analyzed, in which teacher resistance, lack of funding and local universities' contingencies appeared as main obstacles (Puziol, 2017). Professor resistance made it impossible to incorporate The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project guidelines in the process of reformulation of the Pedagogical Project. Many professors refused to know the guidelines of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project and to participate in activities proposed by the professors participating in the project, such as the investigation of general and specific competences and the elaboration of the professional meta-profile of the course.

It was also pointed out as difficulties for the development of the project guidelines, both the change of the area of professors participating in the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project to another department, as well as the late entry in the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, almost at the end of the second phase. Thus, the implementation of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project guidelines was very restricted to the subjects and the teacher-student relationship (pedagogical practice in the classroom), and the objective of disseminating the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project guidelines across Brazil, beyond the participating universities, did not occur due to lack of European Union funding and initiative of Brazilian teachers.

The difficulties in implementing the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project refer to the Bowe and Ball (1992) reflections on the context of practice - the arena in which the effects of the text of the policy are manifested - which causes different impacts depending on the performance of the actors involved and the economic, social and political conditionalities. Thus, educational policy, from its elaboration to its implementation in the text of practice, crosses different territorial scales and, therefore, faces problems, tensions and dilemmas that will continuously modify its results (Robertson, 2002). The question of financing, teacher

performance and resistance are elements that have appeared in the context of the practice and hampered the implementation of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project guidelines

Results

In this category, information about the process of implementing the guidelines in undergraduate courses is presented, especially in the scope of Pedagogical Projects. Five undergraduate courses will be highlighted, which in addition to the interview with the professor participating in the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project had the Pedagogical Projects analyzed in order to seek the presence of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project guidelines (Puziol, 2017).

The first course, civil engineering, promoted the reformulation of Pedagogical Projects between 2007 and 2008. The interviewee reported that participated in the Pedagogical Projects Reform Commission and suggested incorporating some of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project guidelines, so some changes were made. In the presentation of Pedagogical Projects, a reference is made to The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, stating that the conclusions of the first phase of the project were considered for its elaboration, highlighting the teaching and the evaluation by competences (Faculty of Civil Engineering, 2008). Pedagogical Projects also refers to the Bologna process by referring to the international trends of globalization and professional mobility.

Also in the above mentioned course, Pedagogical Projects point out that the egress profile was drawn from research with students, teachers, civil engineers and businessmen, in order to define the most important skills for training civil engineering professionals, starting at 19 specific competences developed in the context of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project. The methodology of work by integrating projects was also incorporated in Pedagogical Projects. The course curriculum is divided into four core areas: basic education, professional training, specific training and academic-scientific-cultural training; in the specific training core were inserted the integrating projects of interdisciplinary character, four subjects, each with 60h class-time, that aim to reduce the fragmented construction of knowledge.

Regarding the program and the syllabus of the course, there was no redesign of the teaching, learning and evaluation process by competences. The structure of the programs was maintained: objectives, syllabus, description of the program from

contents and references. The timetable of subjects also continues to be measured by class-time and not by credits, as directed by the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project.

The law course had its Pedagogical Projects reformulated between 2010 and 2012. For the interviewee, the reformulation was a necessary demand in the face of the limits and exhaustion of the old Pedagogical Projects that had been drawn up in 1994. The reformulation process, according to the interviewee, was a fruitful moment of discussion and reflection on the course, marking a generational change in the Faculty of Law. It was highlighted that some guidelines of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project were introduced in the reformulation discussion of the Pedagogical Projects, involving teachers and students. In Pedagogical Projects, competences are indicated as pillars of the training of the legal professional (Faculty of Law, 2012). The concept of competence used in the Pedagogical Projects is a citation of the definition adopted by the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project.

In the student profile of Pedagogical Projects are related generic and specific skills that were discussed among teachers and students in the process of reformulation, having as a parameter the competences of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project (Faculty of Law, 2012). Competences also appear as a principle of teaching, learning, evaluation, university extension activities, research and legal practice (Faculty of Law, 2012)¹².

In the courses of history (Department of History, 2009), mathematics (Department of Mathematics and Statistics, 2015) and industrial chemistry (Department of Chemistry, 2016), Pedagogical Projects did not change from the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project guidelines. Although Pedagogical Projects were reformulated after the development of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, no mention was made of the design or incorporation of any tuning methodology guideline. It is noteworthy that, in the said Pedagogical Projects, the discussion of the competences proposed by the National Curricular Guidelines was found, without linking with the competences defined in the context of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project.

After analysis, it was possible to verify a punctual inclusion of some guidelines of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project within the scope of Pedagogical Projects of the civil engineering and law courses. In the case of civil engineering Pedagogical

Projects, the incorporation of the specific competences and the adoption of the integrative project methodology were incorporated. The specific competences adopted in Pedagogical Projects of the civil engineering course are a copy of those defined in the scope of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project. It is worth noting that even though some the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project guidelines have been adopted, the course subjects have maintained the structuring by contents and not by competences as predicted by the project.

In the Pedagogical Project of the course of law, the incorporation of the discussion of the competences in the definition of the student profile, in the orientations for teaching, learning, evaluation, extension activities and legal practice, as well as the incorporation of the generic and specific competences of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, since they are practically the same. However, the implementation of The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project guidelines seems to be a purely formal action. It is emphasized that Pedagogical Project analysis is one of the dimensions of the practice context, so that the implementation of Pedagogical Project proposals would require further specific research.

It is considered that only the introduction of some guidelines of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project in Pedagogical Projects does not necessarily represent a change, in practice, of the courses, since it can only be an absorption of the speech. Lima et al. (2008) argue that changes proposed by educational policies can intervene only superficially or cosmetically, that is, only by introducing a new lexicon that is not capable of changing teaching, learning and evaluation.

Final considerations

The interrelations between the contexts of influence, elaboration and practice of politics are dialogic and complex, since they involve actions of power and domination between actors, countries, regional economic blocs and international organizations in a multi-scale governance process that covers different scales - global, national, regional and local. They are also asymmetrical and opaque, as there is no equality in the process of defining and implementing educational policies, and it is difficult to know the purposes, forms and even the actors that are directly and indirectly involved in the design and implementation of policies.

The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, in this scenario, is a project that is part of a global policy of the European Union, which involves

¹² Course programs and syllabus were not analyzed due to unavailability of the material.

deterritorialization and reterritorialization, in the search for the convergence of higher education with economic, political and social goals, which aim, above all, to meet the demands of Europe and not necessarily the particularities and needs of other regions. However, there is a gap between policy development and implementation, as evidenced by the categories of analysis on the particularities of the practice context.

In the context of practice, politics does not take place in the way it was proposed in theory, since it is related to the interpretation and recontextualization carried out by the actors involved. The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project processing revealed a characteristic of current politics, which moves from the bureaucracy of the States to the creation of networks between subjects (in the case of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project, the teachers), avoiding the legal frameworks of government policies. The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project was interpreted by the interviewees as a proposal of mutual construction of knowledge, disregarding that the project is an importation of a European model.

Internationalization is conceived by the interviewees as purpose and not as a process. The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project is linked to possibilities of internationalization of higher education without critically considering different forms and intentionalities that involve this global movement of convergence of teaching and research between universities. CLAR, which is the main contribution of the project, can deepen the student and professional one-way exchange, in which peripheral countries specialize in providing qualified human capital to central countries.

The difficulties presented for the non-implementation of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project are related to teacher resistance regarding the European proposal and also to the fragile performance of professors participating in the project, who did not attend all regional meetings and changed their teaching and research area. The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project may have had relevance to the individual career of teachers, but presented little transfer in the context of the practice. Considering the cut of empirical research and the analysis of Pedagogical Projects, the implementation of the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project guidelines in the context of the practice of Brazilian universities occurred in a punctual and discursive manner, revealing a reproduction of the empty discourse of the project.

Nonetheless, it is understood that it is not only in implementing the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project guidelines that the effects of policies are

found, but also in the diagnostics, concepts, methodologies and models that can serve as reference and legitimation for other national policies in the long run. Thus, the ALFA Tuning Latin America Project will continue to re-escalate.

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