

Article

# Art Education: Two Decades of Creation, Evaluation and Application of an Interdisciplinary Method of Artistic Literacy

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**Abstract:** The Interdisciplinary Method of Musical Literacy, Education and Artistic Awareness (MILMESA) is developed and applied essentially in higher education (artistic, cultural and teacher training courses), promoting effective endogenous (interarts) and exogenous interconnection (artistic and other non-artistic areas) of an inter and pluridisciplinary matrix, as well as assuming itself as a privileged vehicle of relationship and extension to the community in the frame of the making of artistic-cultural and pedagogical-didactic events in the European, Luso-Brazilian, Luso-African and Hispanic American territories. It was created, tested and evaluated in five consecutive quadrennia (2002–2023), being regularly adapted, adapted and added to according to the observed realities, evolving into the deepening of new concepts and models of intervention in these domains (e.g., Expressive and Proximal Didactics). Using the ethnographic method and the case study, and having the source of data collection as the document analysis of written and iconographic or visual sources ( $n = 1386$ ) and participant observation, this study aimed to describe and analyse the application and evolution of MILMESA in terms of education and extension to the community. It was concluded that there was a need to promote, with greater regularity and scope, greater technological interaction via digital platforms and social networks, within the framework of the participation of external specialists (e-DEP) and the very experience of MILMESA's experiences and initiatives, giving it a more meaningful and participatory range.

**Keywords:** methods; artistic education; MILMESA; curriculum



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## 1. Introduction

There are several Active Methods [1] applied in the teaching of music education or Music in Portugal, Europe and the world (e.g., Jaques-Dalcroze, Carl Orff, Zoltán Kodály, Maurice Martenot, Edgar Willems, Shinichi Susuki; Jos Wuytack, John Paynter, Keith Swanwick, Murray Schafer, among others). The same does not happen with art education and its active interdisciplinary and programmatic cross-cutting artistic methods because, in addition to not being an option of the educational authority (Ministries of Education and Science), they do not exist on their own in a systematic and regular way with these characteristics (converging teaching and interdisciplinary practice between arts and teaching other areas of knowledge from the arts and/or artistic expressions). The initiatives known with some of the characteristics of MILMESA invariably result in specific and circumstantial activities and limited-time projects within the context of

project pedagogy or “Area-School” projects [2–6]. According to the literature review, the only known method that triangulates all artistic areas with a focus on education that is known and has been implemented since 2006 in Portugal (and in other CPLP countries—Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries) is the Interdisciplinary Method of Musical Literacy, Education and Artistic Awareness (MILMESA). It is up to us, at this moment, to assess and describe the solutions found over two decades from the embryonic phase (2002) to the most recent results that result in the creation of a model adapted from MILMESA [7] that foresees the external participation of invited specialists in a tutoring format and shared in technical-scientific and pedagogical-didactic activities for public presentation, namely, Proximal Expressive Didactic—DEP [8].

## 2. MILMESA: Goals, Structure and Evolution

MILMESA was created, evaluated and validated between 2002 and 2006, resulting from a Doctoral Thesis in Education defended at the University of Salamanca (Spain). MILMESA’s main objectives are to develop the following areas and capabilities:

1. Develop general and artistic skills in an interdisciplinary way from verbal and non-verbal artistic expressions: musical, plastic, motor and dramatic (currently designated in a disparate and diverse way).
2. Promoting games and the ludic aspect of education.
3. Developing the notion, concept and achievement of artistic literacy.
4. Promoting a broad sense of personal and social, artistic and educational resourcefulness through artistic awareness in general.
5. Creating ties or links between the arts and other areas of knowledge in a transdisciplinary way.
6. Giving due importance to practice as a way to arrive at theory, that is, first practice and then theorize.
7. Face teaching in a pleasurable way and with intentional application of leisure, for full enjoyment and experience of the activities and proposals presented, as skillful ways of seeking knowledge.
8. Promoting participation and collective creation as the basis of most of the artistic processes and products developed by students and professors and levels of equal participation.
9. Developing intervention capacities in education and in the environment in which education or educational action is inserted.
10. Developing a whole spirit of respect for others and their differences, linked to all democratic and free practices promoted by this interdisciplinary method without borders [7] (p. 452).

It is intended to educate/raise awareness among adults in both general and artistic training, but with the aim of preparing for future practical actions directed towards children, youth or adults. Therefore, it must address two essential issues: on one hand, teaching adults (in training) without infantilizing educational content and proposals, and on the other hand, considering the content that these future educators, teachers, and artists will artistically teach/raise awareness in their future students (already as teachers, trainers, or artists in educational or similar service roles).

The games or methodological proposals (129 activities) assigned to MILMESA are essentially constituted and oriented towards the following areas or domains: (1) development of personal and artistic aptitudes. (2) innovation and creativity [9,10]. (3) interaction and sociability. (4) concentration and hearing. (5) rhythm, repetition and movement. (6) expression and improvisation [7] (p. 450). The criteria used to assess the levels of difficulty [11–13] were adopted through the syllabus of the study cycles for which the activities were intended [14,15], based on two main criteria (quality and diversity), which were standardized from conception, testing (practice in the period 2002–05) and final adjustment based on the data and measured results (2006) and taking into consideration the most recent literature (at the time) and appropriate to the purpose and objective of MILMESA [7,8].

The 129 activities are structured by the following four degrees of difficulty (Table 1):

The option for degrees of difficulty [11–13] becomes absolutely essential, since it determines, in the quadrennia subsequent to the creation of MILMESA, the realization of a minimum number of activities per year, in each of the degrees of difficulty and, this time, promoting the contact of users with various degrees of complexity of basic activities of the method.

**Table 1.** Activities that are part of MILMESA by Degree of Difficulty.

Phases by Quadrennium	
Difficulty Degree I	21 Art educational activities
Difficulty Degree II	55 Art educational activities
Difficulty Degree III	35 Art educational activities
Difficulty Degree IV	18 Advanced art educational activities

Each year, between four and eight MILMESA activities are carried out (minimum one activity per Difficulty Level), and, every four years, 24 ( $n = 6$  | year) to 28 ( $n = 8$  | year) activities are carried out. Over time (in periods 2, 3, 4 and 5), the following curricular units and respective study cycles were added to the first quadrennium, where we started to develop and implement MILMESA: 1. UTAD (University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro): PhD in Sciences Education (Integrated Didactics of Artistic Expressions; Thesis Project); Master in Cultural Sciences (Music and Other Arts and Arts; Culture and Identity); master's degree in pre-school education (Didactics of Expressions; Integrated Didactics of Expressions; Interdisciplinary Seminar); Master's Degree in Pre-School Education and 1st Cycle of Basic Education (Didactics of Expressions; Integrated Didactics of Expressions; Interdisciplinary Seminar); Master's Degree in 1st and 2nd Cycles of Basic Education (Didactics of Expressions; Integrated Didactics of Expressions; Interdisciplinary Seminar); Master in Pedagogical Supervision (Didactics of Expressions); Master's Degree Teaching of the 1st CEB and of Mathematics and Natural Sciences in the 2nd cycle (Interdisciplinary Seminar; Integrated Didactics of Expressions); Master's Degree Teaching 1st CEB and Portuguese and History and Geography of Portugal (Interdisciplinary Seminar; Integrated Didactics of Expressions); Master in Theater Teaching (Music, Text and Performance; Musical Theater; Stage I; Stage II; Interdisciplinary Seminar I; Interdisciplinary Seminar II); Degree in Basic Education (Didactics of Expressions; Artistic Project of Educational Intervention); Degree in Languages, Literatures and Cultures (Music and Society; Theater Culture); Degree in Theater and Performing Arts (Music for Theater and Cinema; Didactics of Expressions; Artistic Internship or Project; Musical Theater); Degree in Cultural and Community Animation (Musical Theatre; Practices I: ECOCAMPUS Cultural Dynamization; Practices II: Cultural Dynamization of Cultural and Socio-Educational Institutions; Artistic Project of Educational Intervention; Atelier: Drama and Culture); 2. Jean Piaget School of Education—Viseu: Master in Music Education (Diagnosis and Assessment in Music Education); 3. Higher Institute of Intercultural and Transdisciplinary Studies—Mirandela: Master's Degree in Instrument Pedagogy (General Pedagogy; Research Methodologies and Techniques in Musical Sciences).

The basis of each activity is largely centered on a starting point of a non-verbal artistic expression (which we consider artistically more dialoguing, resilient and adaptable to disciplinary sharing and interaction) so that, in an interdisciplinary way, they are integrated and complement other areas of expressions. arts, always with the intention of responding, mitigating or helping didactically and artistically to work on syllabus contents from other areas of knowledge based on this interarts management.

### 3. Methodological Framework

This is a case study [16–20] with a methodological matrix based on Method and Ethnographic Research [21–23], using document analysis [24–26] and Participant Observation [18,27–31], structured by 6 categories to be measured in 4 of the 5 periods resulting from the MILMESA (intersection zones between periods).

The case study comprises a flexible triangulation structure of diverse sources for the analysis of a certain phenomenon in a certain context (in the educational case), as well as allowing a deep participation of the researcher in the reality that is being studied (e.g., conception, development and evaluation) with the purpose of better understanding in their own terms, allowing generalizations and the possibility of replication in an analogous context. Ethnographic research [21–23], also in this sense, takes a holistic view of

several factors of the same phenomenon where the researcher clearly interferes. It also foresees, along with document analysis, the possibility of gathering about itself, for a broader understanding of the object of study, the most diverse sources and resources. The ethnographic method calls for a continuous confrontation between theory and practice and, as a rule, through participant observation, it imposes on the researcher a direct and prolonged contact with his object of study [32]. All these resources and techniques are a crucial part of determining the results of this investigation.

In the 5 stages/periods (quadrennials allocated to the making and subsequent application), we assume the following methodological framework: Period 1 (2002–2006) *ex post facto* non-experimental methodology because, in our opinion, it is closer to the interests and results that we seek in this process, given that they also become more consistent and closer to the truth of the educational action, as well as the object of study. This period (1) will not be considered in this study as it served as a basis and is reflected in the Doctoral Thesis that served to validate MILMESA [7]. In the remaining periods (under analysis in this study) we opted for documental analysis via written and iconographic documents [23–25] and participant observation: Period 2 (2006–2010), Period 3 (2010–2014), Period 4 (2014–2018) and Period 5 (2018–2022).

Within the framework of Participant Observation, the following five action topics guided our action globally: 1. Systematically note the topics relevant to the research. 2. Actively participate in group activities. 3. Deepen the group's internal knowledge. 4. Share crucial moments of participation, reflection and evaluation. 5. Minimize the framework of latent subjectivity in this type of approach. In this case, in the present study, we will only study periods 2, 3, 4 and 5 in more depth, since they are the ones that relate to the application of MILMESA after its preparation, evaluation and formal validation (Period 1) and that in these subsequent periods to this, they already elapse with measures, adaptations or innovations (also) resulting from the previous quadrennium.

The study was submitted to a team of experts in order to be technically and deontologically validated, as it involves the collection and treatment of different sources and data, in a wide time gap.

### 3.1. Research Goals

We chose as the general objective of the present study to describe and analyze the application and evolution of MILMESA, every four years, in two decades, from its creation to the present day in which its 5th Period (2022–2026) continues to be implemented). Based on the triangulation of methodologically associated data, sources and resources, we chose the following specific objectives: 1. Briefly list and describe the main sources (and contributions) that led to the operationalization of changes/adaptations in MILMESA. 2. List the most significant formal and conceptual innovations (events, structures, institutions, brands, concepts, models, etc.) for registration and future memory in each cycle of analysis and evaluation. 3. Understand whether the inter and multidisciplinary application of MILMESA fulfilled its initial premises. 4. Gauge the dimension of the relationship between initiatives and activities and other areas of knowledge (in addition to the artistic universe that is their base). 5. Point out, for the future, the main suggestions/recommendations for improving MILMESA.

### 3.2. Population and Sample

The Population of this study comprises all the courses and institutions that had contact with the methodology and activities associated with MILMESA (national and international in 6 major areas). The sample (direct contact with MILMESA) is distributed in decreasing terms in terms of representativeness across the 6 areas of contact: 1. Initial and specialized Training Courses in Teacher Training ( $n = 433$  | 37.45%); 2. Artistic Matrix Courses ( $n = 381$  | 32.95%); 3. Community Outreach courses ( $n = 122$  | 10.55%); 4. Literary and Cultural courses ( $n = 120$  | 10.38%); 5. Advanced training in the 3rd Cycle ( $n = 96$  | 8.3%); 6. Postdoc ( $n = 4$  | 0.3%). Total: 1156. As an indirect contact, globally and in all editions of

the events that could be counted, the extension activities assigned to MILMESA comprise an approximate participation of 33,550 participants and spectators (data included in the data of the Project “LOCAL MUNDIS” supported by DGARTES—General Directorate of Arts 2022).

### 3.3. Data Collection, Processing and Analysis

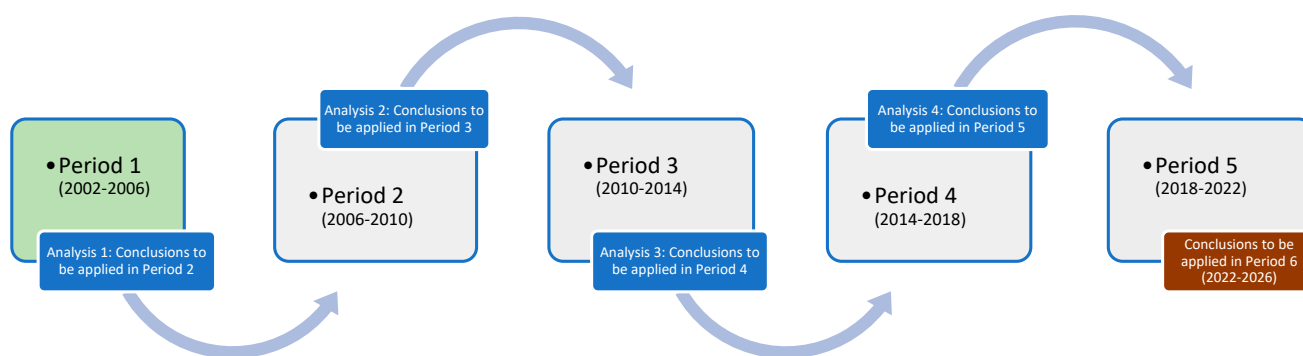
Data collection is limited to all teaching and artistic-cultural activity resulting from MILMESA in the aforementioned quadrennia. Participant Observation is equipped with a Logbook (using notes during and at the end of each semester, annual and four-year activity) for each quadrennium ( $n = 5$ ) resulting from the participation and observation carried out. In turn, the global Document Analysis is based on the following written and iconographic or visual documents generated (Table 2), collected and analyzed in the period under study (2006–22), which assume acronyms as a reference, so that we can easily identify their content (SAF, LB, LP, DV, PP and FP):

**Table 2.** Types of documents for document analysis and their acronyms.

Written Documents	Iconographic or Visual Documents
SAF—student evaluation forms ( $n = 1156$ )	VD—videos ( $n = 72$ )
LB—logbook ( $n = 5$ )	PP—event posters and programs ( $n = 46$ )
LP—legislation, news, various publications resulting from MILMESA ( $n = 27$ )	FP—photo albums of exhibitions and performances ( $n = 80$ )
Total: 1188	Total: 198

One of the most important and significant documents for the present study are, along with participant observation (using the LB), the SAF. In the construction of the FUC (Curricular Unit Sheets) which serves as support and support for the pedagogical-didactic and scientific activity of higher education in Portugal, we enunciated the principles of MILMESA and, as a decisive factor for the final evaluation (student) we considered a short document (SAF) to support assessment (self and hetero assessment in a summarized/simplified Swot Analysis version) in which, in addition to other information on attendance, continuous assessment and other parameters involved, we can identify three important pieces of data. Namely: 1. Participation in activities (individual and collective); 2. How one evaluates and evaluates others (self and hetero evaluation); 3. Improvement recommendations (this item was considered for the present study). The SAF assume a semiannual periodicity. All other documents are part of a lived and observed reality that contributes to founded changes and cyclical and continuous adaptations of the conceptual and operational basis of MILMESA in the context of the classroom and within the framework of the extension to the community in which it has stood out. Every four years we include or adapt new approaches so that MILMESA’s basic philosophy and concept can, in a resilient and adapted way, remain current and meet the objective needs of the public and parties involved. After 5 quadrennia, we carried out an objective global analysis of its implementation, reviewing the evolution and decisions taken by the parties during the process, as well as, as in its base, we listed a series of future perspectives and main challenges for continuity and current status of MILMESA in the classrooms of HEIs that are adopting it (globally or partially).

Every quadrennium we add the partial and global number of references in documents of the various typologies in which the categories are identified, along with a description of references (direct and indirect—via citation or observation) and a summary listing of actions and improvements resulting from this analysis and which are gradually applied in subsequent quadrennia as reported in Figure 1 below:



**Figure 1.** Periods of execution, application and analysis of MILMESA.

The conclusions of period 5 (2018–2022) are being applied in the current quadrennium (2022–2026) and so on, maintaining a predicted and adapted dynamic throughout the application of MILMESA in the various sectors, domains and activities.

The data analysis technique used was Content Analysis [33]. The analysis categories of all data, resulting from documental analysis and participant observation, were prepared a priori and are related to MILMESA’s domains or areas of intervention: (1) development of personal and artistic aptitudes; (2) innovation and creativity; (3) interaction and sociability; (4) concentration and hearing; (5) rhythm, repetition and movement; (6) expression and improvisation [7]. This analysis was submitted to a panel of experts in order to comply with the standards of fidelity and validity of the entire process [34].

The structuring of 6 categories of analysis will count on the numerical identification of the frequency with which they are referred or stand out in the various types of documents analyzed (including the LB). In many cases, the same document may refer to more than one category in each quadrennium. Thus, the overall number of references ( $n = 1386$ ) will, for this reason, greatly exceed the number of documents consulted in various formats, platforms and sources, remaining fixed in the number of total references ( $n = 1964$ ).

Some transcripts of the analyzed documents are presented, in the form of anonymity, in order to underline the main categories found in the study.

#### 4. Results

With regard to the listed categories, we present the following data and conclusions (Tables 3–6):

**Table 3.** Period 2 (2006–2010).

CATEGORIES	School Year			
	2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009	2009–2010
Written documents (SAF, LB, LP)				
	Number of frequency			
(1) Development of personal and artistic skills	38	29	34	33
(2) Creativity and Innovation	12	9	15	11
(3) Interaction and Sociability	17	16	16	18
(4) Concentration and Listening	9	13	9	15
(5) Rhythm, Repetition and Movement	20	16	17	17
(6) Expression and Improvisation	12	14	9	11
Total ( $n = 410$ )	108	97	100	105
Iconographic or visual documents (DV, PP, FP)				
	Number of frequency			
(1) Development of personal and artistic skills	7	6	6	5
(2) Innovation and Creativity	4	2	3	2
(3) Interaction and Sociability	5	4	4	4
(4) Concentration and Listening	2	3	2	3
(5) Rhythm, Repetition and Movement	4	4	5	4
(6) Expression and Improvisation	2	3	2	2
Total ( $n = 88$ )	24	22	22	20
Global total of consulted documents			498	

**Table 4.** Period 3 (2010–2014).

CATEGORIES	School Year			
	2010–2011	2011–2012	2012–2013	2013–2014
Written documents (SAF, LB, LR)				
	Number of frequency			
(1) Development of personal and artistic skills	37	34	29	32
(2) Innovation and Creativity	9	12	7	9
(3) Interaction and Sociability	22	20	16	14
(4) Concentration and Listening	13	15	11	12
(5) Rhythm, Repetition and Movement	14	13	11	11
(6) Expression and Improvisation	9	12	12	8
Total ( <i>n</i> = 382)	104	106	86	86
Iconographic or visual documents (DV, PP, FP)				
	Number of frequency			
(1) Development of personal and artistic skills	8	6	4	5
(2) Innovation and Creativity	3	3	2	2
(3) Interaction and Sociability	7	5	3	3
(4) Concentration and Listening	3	3	2	3
(5) Rhythm, Repetition and Movement	3	2	2	3
(6) Expression and Improvisation	2	2	3	2
Total ( <i>n</i> = 81)	26	21	16	18
Global total of consulted documents			463	

**Table 5.** Period 4 (2014–2018).

CATEGORIES	School Year			
	2014–2015	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018
Written documents (SAF, LB, LR)				
	Number of frequency			
(1) Development of personal and artistic skills	32	29	33	30
(2) Innovation and Creativity	21	16	19	20
(3) Interaction and Sociability	17	13	12	13
(4) Concentration and Listening	18	16	13	16
(5) Rhythm, Repetition and Movement	13	9	11	9
(6) Expression and Improvisation	20	14	11	8
Total ( <i>n</i> = 413)	121	97	99	96
Iconographic or visual documents (VD, PP, FP)				
	Number of frequency			
(1) Development of personal and artistic skills	7	5	6	6
(2) Innovation and Creativity	5	4	4	5
(3) Interaction and Sociability	4	3	3	2
(4) Concentration and Listening	4	4	3	3
(5) Rhythm, Repetition and Movement	3	2	2	2
(6) Expression and Improvisation	5	3	2	2
Total ( <i>n</i> = 89)	28	21	20	20
Global total of consulted documents			502	

We highlight some examples ( $n = 6$  out of 188) that we consider the most enlightening with regard to written documents: 1. “it would be interesting to be able to count on and interact with students from other study cycles in related scientific areas” (SAF13); 2. “some of the activities, namely initiation activities, could be thought together with elements of teacher training to give them a more pedagogical-didactic and comprehensive nature (not just arts)” (SAF28); 3. “we could present our final works to other courses and they could present their creations and activities to ours” (SAF42); 4. “there is individual and group potential for more complex activities to be developed” (LB1). 5. The number of participants is considered small for some of the activities, which may denote a certain redundancy in some tasks performed” (LB16); 6. “As the process develops, the group curriculum project is revised and adjusted, through successive cycles of planning, action and evaluation, which are broadened and deepened throughout the year” [14] (p. 18) (LP1). With regard to iconographic or visual documents, we highlight 6 videos relating to various shows (theatre and musical theatre): 1. “Death by SMS” (VD4); 2. “Blue Forest” (VD5); 3. “Carolina Dances” (PP3); 4. “Maestros for what?” (FP12); 5. “Cage of Happiness” (FP13); 6. “Bremen Musicians—A Christmas Adaptation” (VD8).

**Table 6.** Period 5 (2018–2022).

CATEGORIES	School Year			
	2018–2019	2019–2020	2020–2021	2021–2022
<b>Written documents (SAF, LB, LR)</b>		<b>Number of Frequency</b>		
(1) Development of personal and artistic skills	32	36	35	32
(2) Innovation and Creativity	16	12	17	14
(3) Interaction and Sociability	14	18	20	18
(4) Concentration and Listening	13	12	8	9
(5) Rhythm, Repetition and Movement	9	16	17	16
(6) Expression and Improvisation	14	12	14	9
Total ( <i>n</i> = 413)	98	106	111	98
<b>Iconographic or visual documents (VD, PP, FP)</b>		<b>Number of frequency</b>		
(1) Development of personal and artistic skills	6	7	6	5
(2) Innovation and Creativity	4	3	3	3
(3) Interaction and Sociability	3	4	5	4
(4) Concentration and Listening	3	3	2	2
(5) Rhythm, Repetition and Movement	2	4	4	4
(6) Expression and Improvisation	3	3	3	2
Total ( <i>n</i> = 88)	21	24	23	20
Global total of consulted documents		501		

Based on document analysis and participant observation, we can assume improvement recommendations and carry out implemented improvement actions. During this period, specific activities ( $n = 28 | 129$ ) by degree of difficulty were developed, from which the objective need to involve MILMESA in new cycles of studies/courses in contiguous areas and of advanced complexity was extracted. From participation in undergraduate courses, we moved on to postgraduate, masters, doctoral and post-doctoral degrees (B.A, MBA, MSC, PhD and PPhD).

We highlight some examples ( $n = 6 | 1188$ ) that we consider the most enlightening with regard to written documents: 1. “the presentations made could be integrated into shows, festivals or events external to the university” (SAF73); 2. “if possible, it would be important to publish in specific or specialty journals the result of some work presentations by colleagues” (SAF182); 3. “we could also integrate the works carried out in national and later and international scientific events” (SAF242); 4. “Being certain that the works are of high quality, the possibility of presenting them to other students from other faculties could be considered” (LB33). 5. “There is an objective need to create various organizational structures that accommodate artistic-cultural or pedagogical-didactic work, namely the interaction (or creation) of relevant scientific events [ . . . ] There is, alongside the realization of scientific events, the need, it also aims to create a magazine or databases that can serve as a repository for these works and public presentations resulting from MILMESA” (LB46); 6. “It is intended that everyone becomes active observers with the ability to discover, investigate, experiment and learn” [15] (p. 102) (LP12). As iconographic or visual documents, we highlight 15 records (videos and photo albums) related to various shows (theatre, musical theater, short films and performances): 1. “Brundibár” (VD15); 2. “Strawberries Without Sugar” (PP8); 3. “Les contes” (PP12); 4. “Zapping I” (FP22); 5. “Zapping II” (FP23); 6. “4 twins from different fathers” (FP31); 7. “UTADANIAS” (VD28); 8. “BAD WINE” (VD29); 9. “Parade of ecologically sustainable superheroes” (FP35); 10. Music in the heart” (FP40); 11. “Lion King” (VD37); 12. “The bad animal” (FP41); 13. “Lysistrata” (PP21); 14. “Silly dialogues” (VD45); 15. “John the Rat” (FP44).

We carried out the following improvement actions: in this period specific activities ( $n = 28 | 129$ ) were developed by degree of difficulty and from which the objective need to create, structure or adapt MILMESA to other events that triangulate art was extracted, culture and education in the context of community outreach. To this end, we founded the International Festival of Theater and Performing Arts (currently in its 10th Edition), the Congress of Arts and Communication (currently in its 5th Edition) and the International Symposium on Research in Art (currently in its 15th Edition). Alongside these events, we created ERAS—European Review of Artistic Studies (ISSN Imprint: 2184-



2116 | Electronic ISSN | 1647-3558) to analyze the impacts of these initiatives and events with the aim of deepening applied research in context and in the community.

We highlight some examples ( $n = 6 | 1188$ ) that we consider the most enlightening with regard to written documents: 1. “It becomes urgent, once we have students and participants of the Lusophony, that we carry out something more global and participatory in terms of Portuguese official language and their countries” (FA442); 2. “it would be interesting to think of independent structures with financial and logistical autonomy to promote regular cultural events” (SAF601); 3. “the activities carried out go beyond the artistic theme. They now have an essential and significant pedagogical aspect” (SAF609); 4. “initiatives and activities could encompass other areas of knowledge and put the method used at the service of activities with more impact on PALOP communities” (LB65). 5. “The university’s bureaucratic-administrative burden is, in fact, a clear obstacle to any and all relationships/connections with the community. It becomes desperate to try to articulate with other HEIs and external entities if we have to wait for all the opinions and formal and regulatory requirements related to all decision-making bodies. The existence of an interface structure registered with the institution and in connection with the community would be an added value and an obvious possibility to better manage and seek (including) pecuniary, technical and logistical support for large-scale activities, as some of MILMESA’s activities already are) [ . . . ] In addition to the base magazine of MILMESA’s structure, it will be seriously considered to create others with a focus on areas that go beyond the plan and intervention area of arts and culture)” (LB68); 6. “The organization in partnership for the realization of this project involved 17 higher education institutions from 10 countries, as well as, in local terms, with the unsurpassable collaboration of large dozens of institutions in actions and initiatives that add significant value to the panorama overview of the programming initially presented” [35](p. 3) (LP16).

As iconographic or visual documents, we highlight 5 records (videos and photo albums) related to various shows (exhibitions, music, dance and extension activities): 1. “Botânicas Texturas” (PP30); 2. “Corporal Interlaces” (FP45); 3. “Rubinstein and «I»” (FP46); 4. “Mimar os Sons” (PP33); 5. “Music literacy of inspiration” (VD53).

Based on document analysis and participant observation, we can assume improvement recommendations and carry out implemented improvement actions. During this period, specific activities were developed ( $n = 28 | 129$ ) by degree of difficulty and from which the objective need to create an institution that brought together all initiatives and events and founded scientific journals with autonomy to defend the language culture Portuguese as its greatest added value within the framework of the EU (European Union) and before its CPLP peers. To this end, we founded MUNDIS—Civic Association for Training and Culture/MUNDIS—Associação Cívica de Formação e Cultura (2015) and added 3 new magazines to the reference magazine ERAS (2018) supported by MUNDIS, namely: 1. International Journal of Education, Health and Environment/RIESA—Revista Internacional e Educação, Saúde e Ambiente (ISBN ISSN 2184-4569); 2. Journal of Agricultural and Veterinary Sciences/RICAV—Revista Internacional de Ciências Agrárias e Veterinárias; 3. International Journal of Science, Technology and Society/RICTS—Revista Internacional de Ciência, Tecnologia e Sociedade (ISSN 2184-4577).

We highlight some examples ( $n = 6 | 1188$ ) that we consider the most enlightening with regard to written documents: 1. “We lack close contact with professionals in the areas for which we are receiving higher education” (SAF811); 2. “The training and activities we develop at the university have little (or nothing) to do with what the labor market expects of us” (SAF906); 3. “We should have more advanced training (even if extracurricular) in contact with professionals and companies in the specific area and each of our courses. It would be an idea to consider, since the training they provide us is largely theoretical” (SAF907); 4. “The absence of sharing, monitoring (or simple contact with professionals and their specialties) and awareness of the reality and basic requirements of the demands of the labor universe in the context of post-university training is notorious” (LB86). 5. “the spectrum of interventions and initiatives require partnership and supervised work by

artists, pedagogues and scientists (external specialists) in the making and monitoring of work developed in the context of the classroom and in inter-institutional partnership with particular focus on the intergenerational framework at the level of education. experience and specialty. Creation of the foundations of a concept or model that supports this practice" (LB89); 6. "Promote training workshops given by leading professionals in the area with the main objective of reinforcing knowledge and promoting training and autonomous production in stages after training, so that collective creations and artistic construction as a whole take place in a logic of sharing where everyone can be part of the artistic-cultural whole" [36](p. 8) (LP17).

As iconographic or visual documents, we highlight 5 records (videos, photo albums and programs) related to various shows (exhibitions, music, dance and extension activities): 1. "Project «31 h»" (PP34); 2. "Brasilidades" (FP58); 3. "I ask, dismiss, Breakdown" (FP59); 4. "Mimar the Sounds in Concert" (FP60); 5. "Torga Mundis" (PP35); 6. "Change Worlds" (VD57); 7. "Tell me how it was . . . at the Theater" (VD58); 8. "Eco Jazz" (FP69); 9. "Buffoons" (FP70); 10. "Contos da Biodiversidade de Vila Real" (PP39); 11. "Jazz in Douro" (VD60); 12. "Local Mundis" (VD61); 13. "Torga Mundis—The Deconstruction" (VD62).

Based on document analysis and participant observation, we can assume improvement recommendations and carry out implemented improvement actions. During this period, specific activities ( $n = 28 | 129$ ) were developed by degree of difficulty and from which the objective need to establish more inter-institutional collaboration protocols outside the institution and the classroom was extracted. Start bringing (even more) the universe of the community to learning and joint and protocol initiatives. Alongside this initiative and the inaugural impetus of this four-year period, we patent the concept of the Proximal Expressive Didactic DEP [8] which is widely implemented and operationalized in several CPLP countries, carried out by several professionals from different areas. This model intends (like a peer review) to promote that the works and investigations carried out in a school context can benefit from invited specialists (external to the institution) who supervise the work of public presentation (in the classroom, in the concert hall, in symposiums or congresses previously created for this purpose). Creating bonds and labor relations that are immensely beneficial for the future integration/insertion of professionals in the labor market.

In summary, the main actions carried out can be summarized as follows on the basis of the following four-yearly phases of their implementation (Table 7):

**Table 7.** Phases by quadrennium.

Phases by Quadrennium	
1st Quadrennium (2002–2006)	Conception, testing and publication of MILMESA
2nd Quadrennium (2006–2010)	Application to other study cycles
3rd Quadrennium (2010–2014)	Community outreach
4th Quadrennium (2014–2018)	Specialised structures
5th Quadrennium (2018–2022)	Deepening and updating of the concept

During the 1st Quadrennium (2002–2006) were developed, applied and evaluated ( $n = 129 | 129$ ) that constituted MILMESA and culminated in the Public Defence of the Doctoral Thesis at the Faculty of Education of the University of Salamanca (6 February 2006) and the publication of several teaching support Sebentas [7].

During the 2nd Quadrennium (2006–2010), specific activities ( $n = 28 | 129$ ) by degree of difficulty were developed, from which the objective need to involve MILMESA in new cycles of studies/courses in contiguous areas and of advanced complexity was extracted. From participation in undergraduate degrees, we moved on to postgraduate, masters, doctoral and post-doctoral degrees (B.A, MBA, MSC, PhD and PPhD) [37–42].

During the 3rd Quadrennium (2010–2014), specific activities were developed ( $n = 28 | 129$ ) by degree of difficulty and from which the objective need to create, structure or adapt MILMESA to other events that triangulate art, culture and education in a context of exten-

sion to the community. To this end, we founded the International Festival of Theater and Performing Arts (currently in its 10th Edition), the Congress of Arts and Communication (currently in its 5th Edition) and the International Symposium on Research in Art (currently in its 15th Edition). Alongside these events, we created ERAS—European Review of Artistic Studies (ISSN Imprint: 2184-2116 | Electronic ISSN | 1647-3558) to analyze the impacts of these initiatives and events with the aim of deepening applied research in context and in the community [43–46].

During the 4th Quadrennium (2014–2018), specific activities were developed ( $n = 28 | 129$ ) by degree of difficulty and from which the objective need to create an institution that brought together all initiatives and events and founded scientific journals with autonomy to defend the language culture was extracted. Portuguese as its greatest added value within the framework of the EU (European Union) and before its CPLP peers. To this end, we founded MUNDIS—Civic Association for Training and Culture (2015) and added 3 new magazines to the reference magazine ERAS (2018) supported by MUNDIS, namely: 1. RIESA (ISBN ISSN 2184-4569); 2. RICAIV; 3. RICTS (ISSN 2184-4577).

During the 5th Quadrennium (2018–2022), activities were developed ( $n = 28 | 129$ ) specific by degree of difficulty and from which the objective need to establish more inter-institutional collaboration protocols outside the institution and the classroom was extracted. Start bringing (even more) the universe of the community to learning and joint and protocol initiatives. Alongside this initiative and the inaugural impetus of this quadrennium, we have patented the concept of DEP (Proximal Expressive Didactics) which is widely implemented and operationalized in several CPLP countries, carried out by various professionals from different areas. This model intends (like a peer review) to promote that the works and investigations carried out in a school context can benefit from invited specialists (external to the institution) who supervise the work of public presentation (in the classroom, in the concert hall, in symposiums or congresses previously created for this purpose). Creating bonds and labor relations that are immensely beneficial for the future integration/insertion of professionals in the labor market [47–50].

If, on the one hand, the sequences (intersection zones between quadrennia) show us that solutions can be implemented in time and with relative safety, on the other hand, it appears that external phenomena (e.g., pandemic, war, budgetary and geographic limitations between participants, among others) clearly interfere with the dimension of participation and with the way in which one manages to overcome (or circumvent) what would initially constitute a limitation but which, as a rule, end up constructively imposing itself as an opportunity and advancement. It was also noticed that the time gap of analysis in each block (quadrennium) is adequate and guarantees time for reflection on action and on the implications attached when rethinking initiatives or applying solutions.

We can verify that the adaptations and innovations arising from the evaluation and analysis of suggestions have contributed, and a lot, to MILMESA being able to resist in time and not lose relevance. All suggestions that were operationalized in the following periods ended up having a logical sequence that is understood at a temporal distance of 20 years (from the draft to the present). The sequence could be summarized as follows, in 5 moments: 1. MILMESA was created; 2. In order for it to work and maintain the logic of action, the spectrum of participation was widened (more courses and training) and a continuous path of internationalization began; 3. So that the scientific dimension could be imposed, scientific and cultural events and a specialty magazine were purposely created; 4. So that the events and this dynamic could function autonomously, a specific institution was created for this purpose (for management and fundraising) and the spectrum of magazines dedicated to the dissemination of research activities was expanded; 5. In order for the extension to the community (and internationalization) to close a virtuous cycle, progress was made towards the creation of the DEP to bring external specialists to the internal work and conditions were created (acquisition of specific material for transmission on a dedicated website and other platforms) so that technologies can remain a key element of MILMESA's current situation. These were, in short, the steps and improvements made in MILMESA's dynamics.

## 5. Conclusions and Future Perspectives

After application for two decades (preparation, application, and evolution), we have evolved towards the creation of a DEP (Proximal Expressive Didactics) concept that foresees the investigation and analysis of its themes in the context of supervised work using external specialists whose presentation is limited to the SIIA—International Symposium on Research in Art/Simpósio Internacional de Investigação em Arte (15th Edition), CIAC—International Congress of Arts and Communication/Congresso Internacional de Artes e Comunicação (5th Edition) and the most practical and artistic-cultural or pedagogical-artistic results to be integrated into the program Festival of FITAP—International Theater and Performing Arts Festival/Festival Internacional de Teatro e Artes Performativas (10th Edition). All these events (SIIA, CIAC, FITAP) took place in the Portuguese-speaking world, in particular within the framework of the CPLP (e.g., Vila Real, Porto, Braga, Bragança, Favaíós, Alijó, Provesende, Lamego, Viseu, Macedo de Cavaleiros, Campanhã, Cerco, Peso da Régua, Murça, Fafe, Aveiro, Águas Santas, Amares, Baguim do Monte, Tabuaço, Baião, Torre de Moncorvo, Vidago, Vimioso, S. João da Pesqueira, Cumieira, Amarante, Favaíós, Miranda do Douro, Mirandela, Amarante, Benguela, Bengo, Huambo, Luanda, La Plata, Krosno, Brussels, Cambine, Roraima, Sobral, Rio de Janeiro, São Luís do Maranhão, Paraná, Passo Fundo, Buenos Aires, S. Tomé, Díli, Mindelo, Florianópolis, Copacabana, Bissau, Campina Grande, among many others). Both variants (research and applied research in an artistic and educational context) are treated and published regularly in books and scientific articles assigned to magazines assigned to a particular association that has the same purpose: to boost the culture and arts of (and in) Portuguese language around the world (MUNDIS) namely: 1. European Review of Artistic Studies/Revista Europeia de Estudos Artísticos (founded in 2011); 2. International Journal of Science, Technology and Society/Revista Internacional de Ciência, Tecnologia e Sociedade (founded in 2018); 3. International Journal of Education, Health and Environment/Revista Internacional de Educação, Saúde e Ambiente (founded in 2018). In these four-year cycles, we have been assessing the results and expectations (recommendations for improvement) of the participants, reiterating and evolving the concept and central objectives of MILMESA (Table 8).

**Table 8.** Summary chart: Set of four-year evolution cycles.

Periods	Activities	New Interactions	Future Perspectives	Actions Implemented
2002–2006	( <i>n</i> = 129)	More students	application in context	Preparation of the PhD Thesis
2006–2010	( <i>n</i> = 28   129)	More courses	Application in other courses	B.A, MsC, PhD e PPhD
2010–2014	( <i>n</i> = 28   129)	More events	Articulation between science and art	FITAP/CIAC/SIIA
2014–2018	( <i>n</i> = 28   129)	Move activities	Artistic/scientific support	MUNDIS and Journals
2018–2022	( <i>n</i> = 28   129)	More protocols	Science, art and community	Concept DEP

The main conclusion we reached is related to the fact that all this activity and interaction with the curricula and curricular units that are supported by MILMESA mean that, in our opinion, and after two decades after its application, the assumptions of application and integrated evolution of MILMESA in the research, investigation and extension triad are a reality validated by the competent national and international bodies in the areas of intervention (e.g., international indexing bases; QUALIS-CAPES; DGARTES; GARANTIR CULTURA; HEIs from dozens of countries; public institutions, private and cooperatives, among many others) through their acceptance, support (logistic, technical, pecuniary or otherwise) and direct and indirect participation in MILMESA's activities.

With each quadrennium and in view of the evaluation carried out, new ways were created, reinforced or built to maintain and evolve the basic concept attached to MILMESA, which is its basic integrative, plural and interdisciplinary character. With immediate effect and in the following quadrennia and so on. The transversality of its action is experienced by generations of students and teachers, by researchers and artists, by performers and spectators from dozens of countries and institutions on five continents (with emphasis on Europe, South America and Africa). Thus, inside and outside the academy, all direct and

indirect participants will be able to replicate and improve MILMESA's activities, objectives and reach, improving it, autonomously.

MILMESA, along with the support structures created to directly and indirectly support its promotion, internally or externally to higher education institutions and others (because schools do not end at school), will be, as we see, its main added value. It makes it more resilient, independent and autonomous, always focused on plural, diverse and broad participation and terms of social, artistic and cultural responsibility of its agents and promoters. It contributes to active participation in the construction of knowledge in curricula and, at the same time, interacts with institutions and their interlocutors so that they apply these differentiating factors that are embodied by involving teaching, research in context and (whenever possible) as part of community outreach.

As future perspectives and through situations, however experienced, at the end of Period 5, we move forward to adapt the DEP model to the e-DEP, so that students can also, autonomously, associate specialists (to their work, creations and presentations) that they know or look for in their social networks and other personal and social interaction platforms. A fact that makes them responsible and proceeds to a deliberate articulation with the specialists and with the moderator of the model. It also appears as absolutely necessary to strengthen the relationship/interaction between areas of knowledge that go beyond the specific areas of the arts and/artistic education that were at the base of MILMESA (e.g., the use of an artistic expression to help understand or solve a problem of a programmatic content of another area of knowledge).

We also conclude that MILMESA can be used in any artistic-cultural and/or pedagogical-scientific area. Therefore, its matrix foresees (and reflects) its action from one of the artistic areas in interaction with the other artistic areas that, in turn, integrate and articulate with the other areas of knowledge. Thus, its organizational base can certainly be adapted and used in an inverse way and by another area. Taking a different route, as long as it is focused on its interdisciplinary matrix and on raising awareness of the areas for which initiatives and interventions are intended. The principle, mission and objectives, as well as the open and plural conceptual (and operational) structure, ensure that it can be used eventually effectively in other areas of knowledge. It would, effectively, fulfill one of his most designs. Studying and learning, investigating and applying knowledge in an integrated, inclusive, plural, inter and multidisciplinary way, whenever possible, can be fun, dynamic, pleasant and very constructive. This mark (of reflecting and thinking about simple things and transforming them into something more) may be the mark of two decades of thinking about school inside and outside it. MILMESA was created and will continue to constitute a common place where the artistic and educational universe commonly merge.

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