Augmentative and Alternative Communication: Comparison of free software using ARASAAC symbols: TICO, AraBoard and In-Tic

TO
TERAPIA OCUPACIONAL
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AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION - AAC AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY -OT

Alternative Communication comprises the use of graphic symbols arranged in communication boards, speech generating devices, computers or tablets in order to allow individuals with complex communications needs to express their needs and wants.
Integrating a multidisciplinary team, the **occupational therapist** is the professional involved in the assessment of accessibility and training in the use of Alternative Communication resources, considering the motor, sensory, cognitive and emotional abilities of the user as well as the characteristics of the environment where the client is involved and the equipment and softwares available.

GOAL

To compare three software TICO, AraBoard and In-TIC. These softwares uses the ARASAAC symbols and are available at the Portal's website.
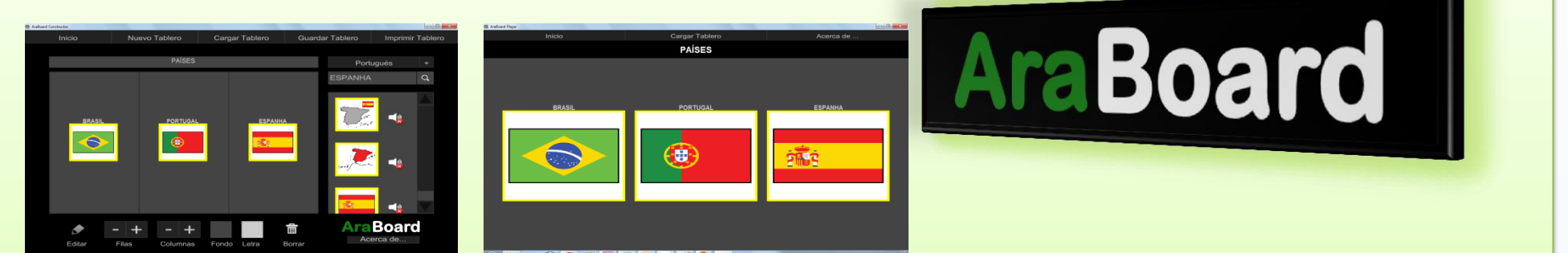
METHODOLOGY

Within the programs that use ARASAAC symbols, we selected free access programs, which allowed the use of the Portuguese language in the construction of communication boards. We analyzed the descriptions of programs and created applications to evaluate the tools offered.

The In-Tic allows user to (1) create customized environments for access to on the computer, Internet or the basic functions of the mobile device, (2) run specific applications and games, using virtual keyboards, scanning system, mouse emulator.
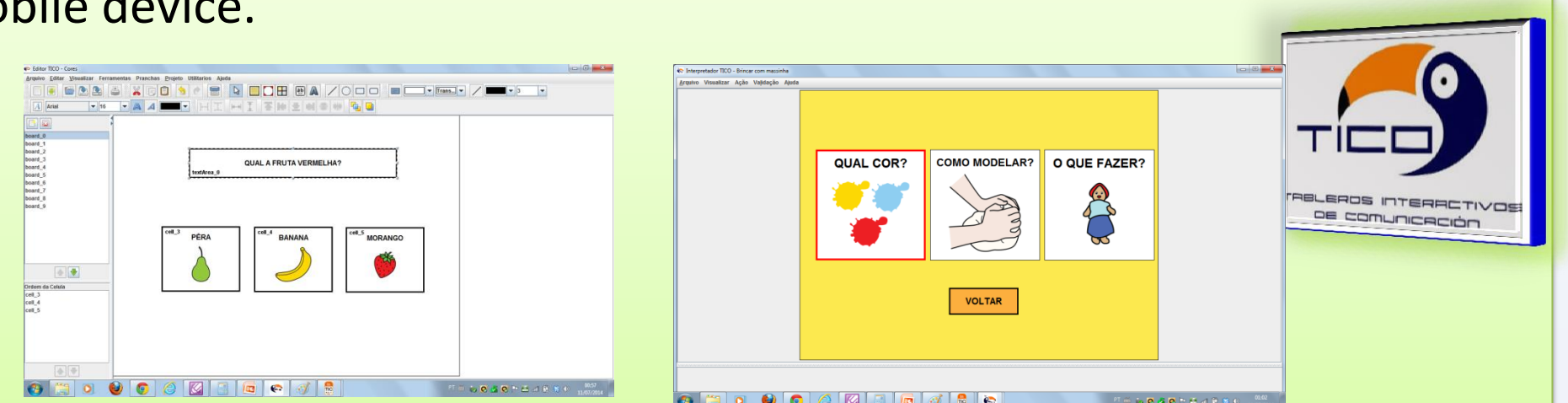

RESULTS

	In-TIC	ARABOARD	TICO
computer	with Linux and Windows system	with Windows system	with Windows system
mobile device	with Android system	with Android system	with Android system
scanning as an access mode	x		x
boards that links	x		x
construction with access direct to internet		x	
insert sound recorded	x	x	x
insert video			x
accumulate cells to built sentences			x
auditive feedback	x		x
Construction direct in the mobile device		x	

The AraBoard permit the creation, editing and use of communication boards from one to 32 cells. It is possible to insert photos direct from the camera.

The Tico allows to save the same application to be used in computer or mobile device.

CONCLUSION

The provision of free access software in Portuguese is a major breakthrough in the field of Alternative Communication in Brazil. The study and teaching of these software can equip teachers, occupational therapists, speech language pathologist and other professionals involved in the teaching – learning and the care for individuals with complex communication needs. For choosing the best option for users and professionals, the characteristic of each software must be analyzed and understood.

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