

Emotion, Silence and Meaning Making in Translanguaging Towards Social Justice in *Strangers*

Emoção, silêncio e construção de sentido em translanguagem rumo à justiça social em Strangers

Nara Hiroko Takaki*

*Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul / Mato Grosso do Sul / Brasil

narahi08@gmail.com

<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8574-5842>

ABSTRACT: This article is part of a project on social justice and its objective here is twofold: to present the partial results of an ongoing research, which started in September, in 2019, to show evidence that translanguaging is only mentioned once by one of the research participants, which reinforces the need to approach it in educational environment and to illustrate the place of emotion, silence and meaning making towards social justice, through the analysis of a short film, seeking to expand studies on translanguaging. This is also justified by the fact that, undergraduate students majoring in Portuguese and English languages, understand translanguaging as the uses of diverse languages, but do not recognize trans-semiosis, emotion and silence as entangled in meaning making. It borrows views from García; Alves (2019), García; Wei (2014), García (2020), Blackledge; Creese (2011), Canagarajah (2013), Makalela (2015, 2016, 2017), Makalela; Dhokotera (2021), Nkadameng; Makalela (2015) in dialogue with decolonial perspectives by Grosfoguel (2013), Menezes de Souza (2019a, 2021), Mignolo; Walsh (2018), Maldonado-Torres (2007), Quijano (2007) and Southern theories by Santos (2018). Views on emotion are supported by Barcelos (2005) and Aragão (2011). Concerning silence, it draws on localized and meaningful aspects, as argued by Granger (2004) and King (2013). The methodology is qualitative and interpretive, assuming my intersubjectivity ingrained in the aforementioned theories, which also inform my locus of enunciation to analyze the film in question. The participants are all volunteers chosen according to the sequence of their affirmative responses to want to become informants of this research. This group is formed of five professors, (under)graduate students of languages from public Brazilian universities. Working on and/or studying at public universities was crucial for the criterion concerning the invitations. The instruments to generate data include online individual interviews and questionnaires. One question of each of these modalities is sent to the participants via WhatsApp and/or email per term. This is the penultimate one. The partial results reveal that translanguaging might gain potentials for experimentation, setting emotion and silence into movements with religious, identity, cultural and political issues, away from stability. Such movements embrace their own danger, relief and ambiguity, playing a crucial role in translanguaging for social justice.

KEYWORDS: Emotion in translanguaging, Silence, Decoloniality in English education.

RESUMO: Este artigo é parte de uma pesquisa sobre justiça social e seu objetivo aqui é duplo: apresentar resultados parciais de uma pesquisa em andamento, que iniciou em setembro de 2019, para evidenciar que a translanguagem é mencionada apenas uma vez por um dos participantes, o que reforça a necessidade de abordá-la no ambiente educacional e ilustrar o lugar da emoção, do silêncio e da construção de sentido rumo à justiça social, por meio da análise de um curta, buscando expandir estudos de translangua-



gem. Isso se justifica pelo fato de que graduandos de português e inglês entendem translanguagem como usos de diversas línguas, mas não reconhecem a trans-semiosis, o silêncio e a emoção enredada na construção de sentido. Toma emprestadas visões de García; Alves (2019), García; Wei (2014), García (2020), Blackledge; Creese (2011), Canagarajah (2013), Makalela (2015, 2016, 2017), Makalela; Dhokotera (2021), Nkadameng; Makalela (2015) em diálogo com perspectivas decoloniais de Grosfoguel (2013), Menezes de Souza (2019a, 2021), Mignolo; Walsh (2018), Maldonado-Torres (2007), Quijano (2007) e teorias sulistas de Santos (2018). Visões sobre emoção são sustentadas por Barcelos (2005) e Aragão (2011). No que se refere ao silêncio, o artigo pauta-se em aspectos localizados e significativos como argumenta Granger (2004) e King (2013). A metodologia é qualitativa, interpretativista, assumindo minha intersubjetividade enredada nas teorias supracitadas que informam meu lócus de enunciação para analisar o filme em questão. Os participantes são voluntários escolhidos de acordo com a sequência das respostas afirmativas para se tornarem membros desta pesquisa. O grupo é formado por cinco docentes, seis pós-graduandos e seis graduandos em línguas de universidades brasileiras públicas. Trabalhar e/ou estudar em universidades públicas foi o critério usado para os convites. Os instrumentos de geração de dados incluem entrevistas e questionários individuais e online. Uma pergunta de cada modalidade é enviada via WhatsApp e/ou e-mail para os participantes semestralmente. Este é o penúltimo semestre. Os resultados parciais revelam que a translanguagem pode expandir o potencial de experimentação, lançando emoção e silêncio em movimentos com questões religiosas, identitárias, culturais, e políticas distanciando-se da estabilidade. Tais movimentos contemplam seus próprios perigos, alívios e ambiguidade, um papel crucial na translanguagem em direção à justiça social.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Emoção na Translanguagem, Silêncio, Decolonialidade na formação em inglês.

1 To start the conversation

Updated discussions around social justice, to ensure access to inclusive, equitable quality and free education, health, the cultivation of collective values, and the present-future of the planet have garnished language educators' attention to what kind of society is needed, with what type of agents and the role of language in this direction. Concerning language, other interrogations emerge to challenge its static and universal conceptions, which place its users as reproducers of ideas, ideologies and agency to favor hegemonic Westernized groups.

The aforementioned concerns allude to the studies and reflections of García; Alves (2019), García; Wei (2014), García (2020), Blackledge; Creese (2011), Canagarajah (2013), Makalela (2015, 2016, 2017), Makalela; Dhokotera (2021), Nkadameng; Makalela (2015), among others, who have long been exercising agency in specific contexts with a view to promote more democratic education and, thus, social participation of the people in disadvantageous positions and conditions.

Regarding research on the Kashinawa's language, in the North of Brazil, Menezes de Souza (2004) contends that multimodality was present and natural in such a community much before Columbus arrived in America. Studying images for more than thirty-five years, Kress (2010) has placed emphasis on the value of multimodality, without which, oral and written languages are not capable of showing/expressing/presenting/capturing complex meanings, accelerated by the rapid transformation of particular contexts in which digitalia has intensified. For many people scarcely a day goes by without some interactions with images, sounds, animations, gestures, spatiality, emotion, and silence within communication. Arguably, there is no separation among these components when we think that translanguaging and, thus, differences constitute us, instead of singularity, a fundamental premise towards social justice.

When language is seen through the lens of history and the colonality of power (QUIJANO, 2005, 2007) in Latin America and beyond it, one can understand the political aspect inherent to its conception. The colonality of power invented by the white elite who remained and expanded in Latin America made the colonial subjects' language, knowledge, race, identity, religion, and voice invisible, under the premise that a new societal order had to be constructed by mainstream, modern, linear and rational paradigms. This is a perception shared among the authors supporting translanguaging (GARCÍA; ALVES, 2019) in dialogue with decoloniality to try to respond to such ontoepistemological Eurocentric authority from an educational and societal perspective attached to the politics of our loci of enunciation (MIGNOLO; WALSH, 2018) and to move away from othering/otherness that comes with the imposition of normativity and universal notions of language and ways of living. In other words, translanguaging, from decolonial lenses, seeks to deconstruct ingrained patterns of racialization, capitalism and patriarchal relations through thinking languages and society otherwise. Social justice purports to des-universalize thoughts and actions which enhances all forms of violence blurring and shifting the boundaries between nature and culture.

Alongside this thinking, Grosfoguel (2013) reminds us that Asian and African authors had already tackled the question of colonality and, in the decolonial project, he is not alone. Maldonado-Torres (2007) brings to the forefront the fact that the Eurocentric epistemology has controlled the subject's ontology generating the colonality of being, which is extended by the colonality of seeing, thinking, theorizing, acting and producing relationships otherwise (WALSH, 2018).

The way I see translingual ontoepistemology is very much entrenched in decolonial perspectives. First, it searches for understanding people's meaning making when their language(s) are not part of the group of named languages and colonial agency. Second, it expands life chances in the sense that it legitimizes the subjects' resources and trans-semiotic repertoires, implicated with domestic languages, knowledges, experiences, strategies, creativity, critique, emotions and silence. Such a perspective overlaps with Makalela's (2015, 2016, 2021) notion of *Ubunto translanguaging*. It is based on a philosophical principle: "I am because we are; we are because I am" (MAKALELA, 2016, p. 191), which means your pain is mine too, an important ontological concern. Third, it enhances one's experience by contaminating and being contaminated by the simultaneous learning of different languages, in the case of Africa. To make sense of our social environment, the interdependence of languages used in creative ways fosters fluidity. Also, being contaminated by diversity should be understood as a powerful resource, which allows for interventions to decenter hegemonic episteme and to negotiate power and meanings, as a permanent movement towards social justice, which goes hand in hand with linguistic justice, if this is one's collective concern.

The assumption "I am because you are" echoes Levinas' (2008) ethical concerns as the self being responsible for the other, that is, despite all the self's limitations, the other is not someone to be ignored. This represents an opportunity to unlearn our privileges and learn from and with the other (FREIRE, 2005), for the other (LEVINAS, 2008). In this sense, alterity/difference invites the self to rethink responsibly the other with vested and collective interests, always subject to critique and transformation.

Concerning the language, Fanon (2008, p. 8) attests that "to speak is to exist absolutely for the other" in the sense of serving the other not only as a physical slave, but also as a cultural one. Yet, we do not have any obligation to accept such a condition. On the contrary, we have to "identify, question and interrupt" domination, as Menezes de Souza highlights (INTERCULTURALIDADE E DECOLONIALIDADE: TRAZER O CORPO DE VOLTA E MARCAR O NÃO MARCADO, 2021, 32 min 34 s), in order to

rethink our existing and emerging resources to struggle for new meaning and agency without universalizing projects of education, the social movements, social justice, and the epistemologies that underline them.

It is in this moment that translanguaging entices/invites us to reimagine academia, language and society otherwise with the existing and emerging resources and tools we have and reinvent our imagination from the borders or “cracks [...] place of our location, agency, and everyday struggle” as Walsh argues (2018, p. 82).

This brings me to the question of emotion as socially constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed. I assume emotions as conditions of knowledge, embedded in “ways of knowing, thinking, acting, being, and living” (WALSH, 2018, p. 59). I understand emotions as political, as weapons of struggles, for they are manifested through discourse, for example. Further, if discourses are ideological, so are emotions. Pioneering Brazilian studies related to emotion (ARAGÃO, 2011; BARCELOS, 2015) might spark readers’ interests in the sense that they expand a new venue in translanguaging. García and Wei (2014) contend that translanguaging promotes encounters of different languages, multimodal socio-semiotic aspects, critique, creativity, meaning making and, therefore, ways of coexisting within emotional and symbolic values. Consequently, translanguaging also brings emotions to the fore.

In our view, human beings’ knowledge of language cannot be separated from their knowledge of human relations and human social interaction, which includes the history, the context of usage and the emotional and symbolic values of specific socially constructed languages (GARCÍA; WEI, 2014, p. 31-32).

The role of emotions in language teaching and researching towards social justice is fundamental to resignify human relations from the perspective of the marginalized people. In this way, it may foster space for their agency to undermine the impacts of epistemic violence perpetrated by dominant groups. There are different interpretations of what emotion is. For Barcelos (2015) emotion is social and discursively constructed. It responds to our capacity to revitalize interactions and produce movements. Without them, life would make no sense at all. Aragão (2022) is guided by Maturana’s notion of Biology of Knowing (*apud* ARAGÃO, 2022, p. 6). Not everything is understood by rational logics. Emotions are shared by relational, individual, collective and changeable operations from which people experience new emotions in situated transcultural domains. Aragão (2022, p. 6) explains that, among many characteristics, “the idea of the biological as a reference to the historical dynamics of a living being in its inter-related network of relation”. Seen from biological perspectives, emotion flourishes in communities, as rhizomes. As an open and dynamic system, emotions are entangled in actions as vivid experiences, an important point to be included in meaning making.

I conceive of emotion and silence as culturally, socially constructed and instituted while legitimizing particular interests, excluding others, which means they operate encompassing distinct relations of power in fluxes. Yet they also evolve contingency in particular contexts, and shed light on ambiguities and enigmatic becoming. This view might enhance the possibility for the creation of spaces to contest the ideologies permeating emotion and silence, from time to time. People’s ways of thinking, feeling and doing things with emotions and silence are influenced by their loci of enunciation, by the religious, identity, cultural and political discourses (in constant transformation) and performativities, which are traversed by similar characteristics of the communities they participate in. I prefer to think emotion and silence as mechanisms to continually unsettle relations in our lives in biological, yet not in non-hierarchical mode.

From this basis, the objective here is twofold: to present the partial results of an ongoing research¹ to show evidence that translanguaging is only mentioned once by one of the research participants, which reinforces the need to approach it in the educational environment and to illustrate the place of emotion, silence and meaning making towards social justice, through the analysis of a short film, seeking to expand studies on translanguaging.

2 Background information of the ongoing research

Translanguaging as theorized by the aforementioned authors is not officially acknowledged as a norm in Brazil. The current Common National Curricular Base (BNCC) for secondary and high school has established English as the only foreign language to be taught at federal level. The colonial legacy does not make matters any easy and, ironically, Brazil is surrounded by neighbors, whose official language is Spanish. However, it is not included in such official national curriculum. More evidence of how serious language problems come from the fact that no indigenous language is part of the university programs, except in one or two, and it is even more so when one considers the Brazilian Constitution of 1988, which acknowledges this country as multicultural. Hence, a type of linguistic and cultural apartheid prevails in a country which has been welcoming an increasing number of immigrants on a daily basis.

Working in the language department at a higher education institution has triggered my interest in getting to know how the other colleagues and students understand social justice as an umbrella term, and how they endeavor to reconstruct spaces with the differences, coming from different ontoepistemologies within humanities. Bearing this in mind, I decided to start a project entitled *Cultural linguistic education, language teaching, technologies and productive social justice in dilemmatic times*² in the second term in 2019. I designed a qualitative research methodology as a means to investigate this agenda. The participants are all volunteers chosen according to the sequence of their affirmative responses to want to become informants of this research. This group is formed of five professors, (under)graduate students of languages from public Brazilian universities. Working on and/or studying at public universities was crucial for the criterion concerning the invitations. The instruments to generate data include online individual interviews and questionnaires. One question of each of these modalities is sent to the participants via WhatsApp and/or email per term. This is the penultimate one.

The aim of this research is to understand how participants construct meanings around social justice in their lives. They were divided into three groups: a) language professors and students from the same (under)graduate programs I am part of; b) professors in (under)graduate language courses from other four public universities; c) undergraduate students from the graduate program I am in. They are all familiar with critical education in Freirean terms. In other words, critical education implies the creation of space for the

¹ Under the premise that teacher, student and researcher education go hand in hand with the contemporary societal demands, such as translanguaging, and that they are active agents of possible transformation in inclusive and participatory ways, the research in question aims at investigating how a particular academic community understands and construct meanings revolving around social justice, language, technology and vivid experience through interviews and questionnaires. The research methodology is qualitative and interpretive, considering the participants' sense making, interpretation and positions, and they had the choice to use diverse modes other than oral and written Portuguese or the encounter of languages.

² This research project has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the institutions involved in it, with no funds.

students to be aware of their social places, the oppressive (or not) positions they occupy in specific contexts in society in order to problematize social issues which are relevant for them, embracing race, ethnics, class, religion, age, to mention a few. The socioeconomic profile indicates the participants belong to middle class, and reside in urban areas. Three of them are homosexual and one is bisexual. There are two Japanese and two black descendants. I understand these features are intersected and important when one thinks of social justice towards the majority of the marginalized people in diverse contexts. They work/study Portuguese, English, and Spanish and Brazilian sign language.

For the interview, one question attracted my attention, as only one participant had mentioned translanguaging, and none of them referred to emotions (in the context of translanguaging, as explained in subsequent sections), as shown below.

Researcher: How would indigenous, black, deaf communities, immigrants and refugees, among others, be benefitted with the pedagogical theories and practices in teachers and students education and/or self-development that you have been exercising?³ (Translation mine).

In response to the previous question, the participants explained that:

P1: Deaf people have been struggling for bilingual schools, where Portuguese is spoken and Sign language is used, which are two languages of their right. Where did this groups get power? Where did the indigenous people, the black people, the immigrants and the refugees get power? I believe mostly in classes at the universities. I believe that this “work of ant” which we teachers have executed, in the sense of preparing **critical citizens**, has been valid to disseminate knowledge, awareness, and sense of power among our students, future teachers [...] it is by means of education that we are going to change the unfair social structures of power. It is by Education, **teacher and student education** that we are going to benefit the minority groups, as we are not going to give the fish, but instead teaching them and providing them with the resources to go fishing and fight for their causes⁴. (Translation mine, emphasis mine).

P2: As a language student I cite here **critical literacy**, since the first term, we worked on it [...] we had a discipline called education of ethnic-racial relations, we worked on themes, such as structural racism, multiculturalism, the question of school language and the reproduction of prejudice yes, the diverse heterogeneities, pluralities [...] **translanguaging**⁵. (Translation mine, emphasis mine).

³ From the original: Como comunidades indígenas, quilombolas, surdas, de imigrantes e refugiados, dentre outras, seriam beneficiadas com as teorias e práticas (pedagógicas) na formação de alunos e professores de línguas e/ou autoformação que vem exercitando?

⁴ From the original: As pessoas surdas vêm lutando por escolas bilíngues, onde se fale a Língua Portuguesa e a Libras, que são suas duas línguas de direito. Onde esse grupo social ganhou força? Onde os indígenas, os quilombolas, os imigrantes e refugiados ganharam força? Acredito que, grande parte tenha sido nas salas de aula das Universidades. Acredito que esse “trabalho de formiga” que nós professores temos executado, no sentido de formarmos cidadãos críticos, esteja servindo para disseminarmos conhecimento, consciência e senso de poder entre os nossos alunos, futuros professores [...] é por meio da Educação que conseguimos mudar as estruturas sociais injustas de poder. É pela Educação, no caso, formação de professores e alunos, que conseguimos beneficiar os grupos minoritários, porque não estaremos “dando peixe a ninguém”, mas ensinando-os e munindo-os de recursos para pescarem e lutarem por suas causas.

⁵ From the original: Como acadêmica cito aqui o letramento crítico, que desde o primeiro semestre, nós trabalhamos muito isso, é [...] nós tivemos uma disciplina que se chamava educação das relações étnico-raciais, nós trabalhamos temas como racismo estrutural, multiculturalismo, a questão da linguagem escolar e reprodução do preconceito né, as diversas heterogeneidades, pluralidades [...] translanguagem.

P3: In my practices, I seek to work **citizen education**, the practice of **critical literacy** because it is from them that we think **relations of power**, we think who is benefited by discourses, who is impaired.⁶ (Translation mine, emphasis mine).

P4: In this sense discussions and reflections on **intercultural education, social justice, decoloniality** are important, for example, which should constitute the **epistemological foundations to disrupt the idea of homogeneity and the hegemonic paradigms**⁷. (Translation mine, emphasis mine).

P5: The minoritized, or the sociohistorically neglected by the State can be benefited by **decolonial theories** (for example) as (new) public policies are thought from the **logics of difference** as a premise. In addition, despite the slowness, **new conceptions of knowledge, cultures, language etc. are being created in cultural and academic curricula, impacting the diverse local practices** (including the school ones)⁸. (Translation mine, emphasis mine).

P6: In another discipline, which has applied linguistics as the focus, I address the question of differences in **a critical way** trying to make the students raise aspects which the students can **problematize** in society⁹. (Translation mine, emphasis mine).

Interestingly, the idea of critical literacy is mentioned three times, decoloniality, twice and translanguaging appears only once. This might indicate the need to reinforce translingual education within contexts, in which the minority groups transit, as some of the participants have previously pointed out.

The other participants' visions, in general, reflected the need to emphasize teacher and student education through strategies to minimize the epistemological hierarchies, enticing them to get actively engaged in the pedagogical process by posing questions that go beyond the content and the individual views. Another key point referred to the need to avoid a general language pedagogy for the diverse public in a classroom and getting to know more about the students' contexts, cultural identities to encourage further dialogical exchanges of their lived experiences. I acknowledge the nature of the question I asked the research participants did not focus clearly on translanguaging, emotion and silence as I chose indirect paths¹⁰. This does not mean they do not valorize such themes regarding social justice.

As anticipated in the beginning of this article, from a series of experiments with my undergraduate students, with the use of the short film, *Strangers*, in the classes, they, apparently, conceptualize translanguaging as demarked uses of different languages, leaving emotion and silence behind. Both emotion and silence are entangled in translanguaging, as detailed in the next two sections of this article. For example, emotion in the cited film was seen from dualistic lenses (either as relief or stress in the actors' relationship

⁶ From the original: Nas minhas práticas, eu busco a formação cidadã, a prática do letramento crítico porque é a partir delas que a gente pensa as relações de poder, a gente pensa quem é beneficiado pelos discursos, quem é prejudicado.

⁷ From the original: Nesse sentido, são importantes discussões e reflexões sobre formação intercultural, justiça social, decolonialidade, por exemplo, que devem constituir-se em fundamentos epistemológicos para romper a ideia da homogeneização e os paradigmas hegemônicos.

⁸ From the original: Os minoritarizados, ou os sócio-historicamente alijados do Estado, podem se beneficiar das teorias decoloniais (por exemplo) na medida em que (novas) políticas públicas são pensadas a partir da lógica da diferença como premissa. Além disso, em que pese a lentidão, novas concepções de saber, de cultura, de língua/linguagem etc., impactando as diversas práticas locais (inclusive escolares) estão sendo criadas, nos círculos culturais, acadêmicos, dentre outros.

⁹ From the original: Numa outra disciplina, que tem a linguística aplicada como foco, trato da questão das diferenças de maneira crítica tentando suscitar nos alunos aspectos que eles possam problematizar na sociedade.

¹⁰ The Research Ethics Committee of the institutions involved in this project oblige researchers to present the set of all questions of both the interview and the questionnaires. I elaborated on open questions, deliberately, to avoid leading the participants to provide me with responses only to please me, to meet my expectations, or to be rather straightforward. Such open questions are aligned to the objectives of my research project, though.

instead of an interrelated phenomenon) and silence as fear and tension. Nonetheless, an overhaul of critical perceptions to account for social justice needs to be addressed.

3 Reading *Strangers* through emotion, silence, justice in entangled ways

This film, *Strangers*¹¹ represents an opportunity to discuss how emotion, silence, and meaning making operate in ways to enrich the redesign of translanguaging towards social justice, mainly considering that the great majority of my undergraduate students come from vulnerable social contexts.

Concerning the plot, this film portrays an encounter of men from different religious, identity, cultural, emotional, socio-historical, political, and geographical origins on a train: a white Jewish man wearing a necklace with a star of David, a dark-skinned Muslim man reading an Arabic-language newspaper (an Indian one?), and white tattooed, bald men resembling thugs. In fact, they are neo-nazis, skinheads.

The film begins by showing a platform in dim light, which seems to be late at night and we listen to the sound of a train approaching it. An announcement in French informs the name of the station. The title *Strangers* appears on the screen and it is followed by the back of the Jewish man with a rucksack. As the train stops, he boards and passes by two other passengers, heading for the back of the wagon and seats down, not perceiving yet the Arab man. In seating on the left side of the wagon, he takes a cold glance at him. Silence remains. As the sound of the train proceeds, he looks at the newspaper, noting that it is written in Arabic, suggesting he is a Muslim. The Jewish man makes a point of zipping his rucksack as if he wanted to attract the Muslim's attention. He succeeds and the Muslim man feels extremely uncomfortable as he shows his Star-of-David necklace on purpose. Linguistic, religious, cultural, identity, political and historical divisions have established by now.

This is a moment in which emotion and silence redirect the viewers' engagement in the uncomfortable types of ways of seeing each other, expressing sociohistorical prejudice and intolerance. The black color of the background of the scenes accentuates the focuses on the two faces, one at a time, while the sounds present contrasting tones, as though highlighting the abyssal lines¹² (SANTOS, 2018). The train gathers speed and stops at the next station. The Jewish man continues to hold his Star until the moment he sees the neo-nazis entering and walking straight to their direction to take their seats, some whispering can be heard. One of them holds the two pillars of the aisle closing the passage to prevent the two others, from escaping. The other neo-nazi, seated next to his partner, spray-paints the newspaper, while the viewers see the nazi symbol on his bald head. The Jewish man watches the tension in silence, and the Muslim man looks suspiciously

¹¹ *Strangers* is a seven-minute film directed by Guy Nattiv and Erez Tadmor, Israel in 2003. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpjHSiQLPmA>. Access on September 22, 2022.

¹² Abyssal lines/thinking, in accordance to Santos (2018) are predicated on binary structures of Western imagination. Under the premise that modern, metropolitan, capitalist, patriarchal, colonial Eurocentric science was valid to the detriment of other sciences in other cultures, it separated (has been separating) culture from nature and, thus, ignoring common sense, popular, intuitive, spiritual, secular forms of knowledge and ways of producing epistemologies-ontologies-methodologies (TAKAKI, 2016) from their (ex)colonies. The results are clear: on one side the Northern epistemologies imposed/has been imposing their science as a universality on any other context in the globe to extract intersubjectivities, identities, symbolic and material capitals, spirituality, cosmologies, emotions, silence, trans-semiotic relations, hampering possibilities for inter-cultural translation within pluralities of entangled differences, such as the ecology of knowledge (SANTOS, 2018).

at the white man and turns his newspaper to see the result: a black swastika! He looks at both man and at the Jewish man, observing significantly the piercing in the man's ear and the tattoo in the other man's arm, while the Jewish man does the same. The common threat is confirmed, and the music intensifies the danger.

There comes a time when one skinhead, wearing heavy boots, puts one of his foot between the two legs of the Muslim man. Meanings occur during this period of intense emotion and silence, accentuating the collective insult. The train proceeds and in attempting to stand up to leave, the Jewish's cell phone rings, playing a song for traditional Jewish celebrations, denouncing his religion and identity. In desperation, he tries to stop the cell phone ringing, but it is too late as it gives away his religion, what makes the neo-nazis stare at him disappointed. One of them nods his head, confirming the unexpected identification to his partners.

In *Strangers*, silence is and is not gold, as it 'transpeaks' with emotion to entice viewers to go beyond the mixture of multimodal language for sociohistorical and transcultural meaning making. The Jewish and the Muslim men's agency starts from there, that is, after identifying the common enemies. Hence, translanguaging reinforced by emotion and silence functions at crisscrossed levels, subscribing to the intersectionality (LUGONES, 2008) among questions of gender and race, to which I complement with religion, class, geographical origin, age, disability, and other factors to reinforce the complexity of the coloniality of power, as theorized by such an author.

An announcement in French informs the name of the station. This is the second moment in which human voice is heard. Having identified the oppressors, contested the menace what is left for the Jewish and Muslim men is to interrupt this eminent danger by finding a way out, echoing the decolonial agency, argued by Menezes de Souza (2019a, 2021). This implies being able to identify the oppressor, contest him/her/it and interrupt the violent colonial forces, resembling what Menezes de Souza (2019a, 2021) has suggested in terms of decolonial agency.

Decision making is crucial, now, as the doors may close at any time. It is then that the Jewish man looks at the white man in front of him and at the same time at the Muslim one. With his mouth partially open, he looks at the neo-nazi man. Both minorities understand each other's eyes, silence and emotion. A decisive nod by the Jewish man addressing the Muslim one makes them, quickly, exchange their bags to confuse the bad gang and run away while being followed by them. They take opposite exits, an indication that religious, identity, etc. differences are preserved, a reminder that decolonial translanguaging (GARCÍA, ALVES, 2019) and intercultural translation¹³ (SANTOS, 2018) preserve people's differences while struggling for more spaces of social participation.

The background music and the images are played faster, showing the neo-nazis slanging on the door, making face, as they remain on the wagon. They manage to leave the wagon through different doors, one on the left, the other on the right. The train leaves. Outside, separated by the train track, they turn to the back of the train and shout to celebrate the victory. Now, in front of them, they exchange bags. The Jewish man shows his right hand to thank the other, and the Muslim man nods his head in sign of acceptance. Both of them head for the exits. The Jewish guy shows his necklace again. Learning in seven minutes

¹³ In many instances intercultural translation occurs in diffuse (SANTOS, 2018, p. 40), informal, oral, cognitive and collective fashion, and in more didactic (p. 40), written, reflexive and publicized by leaders of organizations, who reflect upon their identity and on the others, making use of digital media. Pedagogically, deep listening (SANTOS, 2018, p. 253) means hearing and being heard in a political space of struggle, while translating meanings and actions without standardized models, such as the work of an artisan. As the author explains, the artisan repeats processes but leaves space for creativity in ways that two pieces are not the same. Engaging in struggles such as social movements in no easy task as it requires the ability to understand the different forms of exclusions/inclusions and form of violence in each group and among them.

is possible, by reinscribing emotion and silence in ways to recreate forces to navigate ‘translanguagingly’, a subject matter I address in the next section.

4 Going further with emotion, silence, meaning making in translanguaging for social justice

Strangers suggests trans-semiosis is better understood as a powerful tool, and it is even more so when emotion and silence are much more present than named and conventional multi-modes, such as images, sounds, animations and spatiality. There are only two announcements in French and the presence of Arabic language in the newspaper. Such announcements help viewers understand the situation in France, traversed by religious, historical, cultural, political and emotional conflicts as background setting. I contend that much less attention seems to be paid to emotion (BARCELOS, 2005; ARAGÃO 2011) and silence (GRANGER, 2004; KING, 2013) in translanguaging theoretical framework. Subtle and explicit forms of listening, hearing, seeing, acknowledging, understanding, resisting, subverting, uncertainty, interrupting power exertions are all correlated in this apparent silent short film.

Non-linguistic resources, such as: images, sounds, smell (of the spray?), touch (the boot between the legs) silence, body, etc. play an important role to relocalize cultural repertoires and relations of power among the actors in situ, as Pennycook argues:

Language practices are always local practices and thus are constantly being delocalized through their relationship to speakers, places, histories, textual and cultural references, discourses and interpretations (or what we call pretextual, contextual, intertextual, subtextual and posttextual relations) (DOVCHIN; SULTANA; PENNYCOOK, 2015, p. 5)

Emotion and silence are not yet clearly known. Yet, people inhabit them and are entitled to speak/mean not as subaltern isolated language components, but rather as opportunities to open room for expanded comprehension of meanings. They are perceived, felt and used to make people engage in what and how to do next, as a politics of care for the collective, preserving differences.

Referring back to the film, silence and emotion can be highlighted-felt-perceived, transformed and articulated to favor situated marginalized characters’ interests, not as autonomous entities, isolated from sociohistorical and, thus, complex and dynamic loci of enunciation, from which the characters confront each other, interpret and each other’s religious, identitary, cultural and ideological differences to unite to achieve a common goal. After experiencing fear, humiliation and grief, hearing silence otherwise was paramount for them. Striving quickly to create conditions to feel each other’s senses for respect and trust led them to share resistance and reasoning to enact collectivity otherwise, that is, in decolonial translanguaging mode.

Scales of superiority overlap: the Jewish man seems superior to the Muslim in the beginning of the film. A contingent event places the former and the latter as vulnerable when the neo-nazis board the train. Drawing on shared interest and emotion, they seem to preserve and ‘forget’ their differences, simultaneously, for a moment in order to make meanings and redesign strategies fast and creatively. Counting on silence, which translates the tension and the strategy through ways of seeing and using other facial expres-

sions, and body language recontextualize available limited resources on the spot, such as: looks/glances, gestures, spatiality, which apparently are the same.

Nevertheless, a key word in this citation is *relationship*. Relationship goes beyond competences and embraces what Freire (2005) has conceived of as *amorosidade*. *Amorosidade* is constructed within particular contexts, and it presupposes a political, critical, creative compromise between teachers and students. Barcelos (2015) has coined *emotional literacy* as a social and ongoing process. For this author, it can be exercised a) in contagious forms if we connect with the other people's postures, facial and verbal expressions; b) through a sense of belonging, that is showing interest in listening to the other's stories and respect; c) via scaffolding to help others transform their unproductive acts and d) with Freirean *amorosidade*, counting on ethical and responsible forms of promoting a vibrant, happy and serious educational environment for one's self-learning and reflection upon his/her own practice. Borrowing from Maturana, Aragão (2011, p. 183) argues that "It is from the reflexive seeing/looking at emotions, which emerges together with language, that it is possible to reflect upon living."¹⁴

On this matter, it is worth reminding that Freirean *tolerance* and *esperançar* do not mean respectively lenience and hope, but rather they elucidate the need to work hard daily, to exercise openness to deal with differences, and the constant revisions and problematizations of meanings, diverse knowledge, emotions and actions, with a view to redesign conviviality in societal projects. I interpret the two minority characters went through similar experiences in a matter of minutes.

Also, I understand emotions also evolve from body readings. I can only read bodies because they are culturally and socio-historically dynamic. According to Barcelos (2015), Benesch (2018), among others, emotions involve bodily dispositions. People perceive them as physically manifested; however, they are also socially constructed: "emotions are produced and performed within specific historical contexts, mediated by power relations" (BENESCH, 2018, p. 8). Nurturing/engaging in processes of reinterpreting bodies as texts is crucial in each second. Structured as texts, their bodies carry symbolic power reiterating the situatedness of religious, sociohistorical, cultural, ideological and emotional past-present, which makes difficult any possibility of negotiation among themselves. How do they know that? Through reading their bodies, silence, spatiality, trans-semiosis and translingual practices and of the others as discursive and performative events. It transforms the space into an assemblage within assemblages of power and semiosis, decentralizing the dominant role of oral language, for example, to bring to light the aural-visual-breathing-hearing-silent-spoken-written-painted-emotional-healing-unknown-language fashion, leading the actors to breathe in a mixture of hate, fear, but also hope and energy to provoke a change in this environment.

Exploring and emotion and silence in *Strangers* inscribes one culture into the other's, one identity into the other's, one language into the other's. The entanglement of the aural-visual-breathing-hearing-silent-spoken-written-painted-emotional-healing unknown-language occurs by the combination of the speed of the train, of the song played, of the images displayed from the outside of the wagon, from the contrast between the colors, the track sound of this film, the emotion and silence stand out as they enunciate predictions, suspensions of actions, but never absence of meanings. At the same time, ambiguity in these very elements and the intersection of different voices, looks and interests from different loci of enunciation, which is about to change due to complex eye contact, the skin colors, the Arabic newspaper, the star, the faces, the strong tattooed bodies, the swastika on a bald head, and the contingent Jewish song.

¹⁴ From the original: É no olhar reflexivo para as emoções, que surge junto da linguagem, que é possível refletir sobre o viver.

In feeling fear, insecurity and being minority in this ideological and performative landscape, a question can be raised: What are the actors doing when they listen to silence? Not only silence is interpreted, but also all the trans-semiotic assemblage, which is not isolated from silence. Rather than mere intuition, silence is an active process and not the kind of silence which lies in the spaces between words, as there are no words spoken among the actors. Engaging in each other's language, culture and ideological positions, presupposes the interpretation of emotion and silence and this pivotal for any process of meaning making. In what ways are they themselves immersed in this new environment? What to do next? How to escape from this dangerous situation? Silence here is the symptom of conflict, for the two characters are stuck among the bad guys. This is neither a passive process to the actors nor to the viewers. Mastering how emotion, silence and multimodality work in performative ways, even though they may not know each other's language, permits them to make life an act of possibility to mitigate the impact of violence.

The self as identity is reconstructed, and inner dialogue has a role to play, that is, to trouble the comfort zone, which conventional verbal interactions would allow. For the sake of illustration, let's imagine both the Jewish and the Muslim spoke a common language. Even if they were aware of that, without inferring trans-semiotic meanings from the emerging events, they would not stand a chance to understand each other's ways of seeing, listening to silence, feeling to elaborate a strategy (standing up, exchanging bags and running away).

Silence has multiple functions and forms, and it can be best understood from a transdisciplinary prism. As such, it becomes a complex and ambiguous phenomenon; it is not a mere opposition to speech, as reiterated previously.

The silence researcher needs to be aware that interpretations and evaluations of silent behavior may differ not only between cultures, but also within cultures. Such appraisals depend heavily upon context, speakers' characteristics and their conversation styles (KING, 2013, p. 30).

In the case of *Strangers*, refraining from speaking might indicate an emotional defense against the dangerous person/people and this is followed by marked changes in their physical orientations, with extended intentional period of silence. Normally, less powered people tend to remain silent in specific settings. Nevertheless, this is not the case here, as the interpersonal relationship was very negative for all the cultures and identities involved. Emotion, silence and other trans-semiotic elements overlap with each other. In this threatening context, it functions as a sign of lack of empathy among the characters, but also as a strategy for the two minoritized men to think of an alternative to free themselves from colonial power. Putting it differently, emotion and silence contributed to a form of agency coming from the marginalized characters.

For more than ten years, I have used *Strangers* in my classes to create space for critical translingual debates and the great majority of the students conclude that people can use diverse ways to communicate, including gestures, objects, music and expressions, while interpreting the world around them. As regards silence, students' generalization is driven by religious intolerance encapsulated in the characters' ways of looking at each other. Their conclusion revolves around the fact that silence helps the Jewish and the Muslim men to identify the common ground (their enemies) and this is transformed into empathy: they understood each other's needs and planned to escape with no guarantee of results. The outcome happens to be safe for them.

Trans-multi-semiotic resources in combination with silence invoke a complex narrative, a clear example of decolonizing oral and written language as dominant modes of interaction and communication.

The producers of such a cultural artefact are able to culturally and trans-semiotically translate meanings through the digital media in seven minutes, counting on the viewers as coauthors of interpretation. Clearly, this constitutes translanguaging otherwise¹⁵, mixing critique, decoloniality, amplifying the horizons of possibilities to minimize violence among different communities, identities, which are traversed by dynamic and even paradoxical religious, emotional, silent, cultural, in short, by sociohistorical features, also at the mercy of societal transformations.

Hinted by the fact that the Jewish's identity is revealed through the song, an epistemic change is detected. In other words, he himself perceives his apparent superior status in relation to the Muslim man being "equalized" as soon as the neo-nazis approach, aiming at attacking them. By the same token, the Muslim man, reading between the lines, grasps the effects of the silence, and notes that he is not alone anymore within the imminent danger. A change in his status also happens: from a subalternized body to a less inferior one, as both of them are trapped.

Pertaining to language, it is pivotal to remind that linguistic racism (NASCIMENTO, 2019) and the coloniality of language (VERONELLI, 2021) stem from ways of articulating them within uneven relations of power. This brings me to another point: translanguaging might also be used as a political tool to (de)colonize relationships embracing religion, identity, race, ethnics, class, gender, age, religion, nationality, among other categories. Such categories were invented by the hegemonic white, heterosexual, Christian European, without racializing himself/herself, resulting in his/her imposition of the universality of their ways of living, erasing differences (GARCÍA, ALVES, 2019).

Such universality falls apart, considering that one may be powerful than the other in one particular context, but be less so in another situation. In order to provoke a transformation of power in this game (the situation the film presents), an act of self-insertion to interpret trans-semiotic and silence is needed. Furthermore, complete hubris does not help in this moment, which means that an interruption of the apparent universality calls for different choices. Such choices embody emotion (as a common interest for both actors, preserving their differences, though) and the aforementioned categories, as evidence for survival. Emotion and silence are no less significant to redesign social justice in this micro event, as a metonymy or metaphor of complicated present local-global times, a key point to expand studies revolving around translanguaging.

Drawing on Barthes (*apud* GRANGER, 2004, p. 108), Granger suggests our going back to bodies:

'Language is a skin: I rub my language against the other. It is as if I had words instead of fingers, or fingers at the tip of my words' (Barthes, 1978: 73). This evocative language in Barthes's version of the metaphor brings us, once more, back through words to bodies. But not just to our bodies, for, if we play a little with Barthes's words, we can wonder how the skin-that-is-language rubs against the skin of another, the other's language. Our skin touches the skin of the other, yet it also holds us within ourselves, holds our selves within us [...], but it also touches the world, at once both connecting us and preventing our connection with what is other to us – both on the inside and on the outside.

Far from guaranteeing a successful outcome, interpretation of the trans-semiosis, emotion, silence, valuing intersubjectivity as resources for learning permits the Jewish and the Muslim men to capture the invisible weaves, the blind spots, the silent stories offering assistance in the form of hints, which are important to 'get things right' within minutes. Emotion, silence, and social justice are socially and performatively

¹⁵ Translanguaging otherwise means in ways to avoid the reproduction of the hegemonic hierarchies.

constructed, and their meanings are local-globally (on the wagon) resignified as any other conception. In this translanguaging analysis of *Strangers*, hidden concepts of religion, race, identity of the characters' experience locate them and the viewers as producers of knowledge, going beyond consumption. Both Jewish and Muslim's loci of enunciation get intertwined to generate bottom-up agency.

As they experience a process of critical interculturality¹⁶ (WALSH, 2018), that is, they engender a rupture in their essentialist libraries and experience to make an effort to negotiate their own social and epistemic conditions. This process demands from both ontoepistemology otherwise, through freeing themselves from their radical, polarized and fixed sociohistorical contexts from which they belong(ed). I say belonged as, for they stand up for each other and get determined to occupy a position, dislocating their loci of enunciation and *status quo*. Thus, it is possible to create a space of struggle in the face of the inequalities and threat starting from decolonizing our emotions, silence, minds, attitude and agency.

Hand in hand with this conflict, and the uncertainty arising from it, goes the kernel of a wish between the two minorities (in terms of power): to help each other to maintain their integrity and save their own lives. Reading the trans-semiotic, emotional, and silent sub-texts of what is going on means establishing a link with the unknown otherness. Readiness to act here is entirely dependent on the intercultural translation (SANTOS, 2008) of emotion, silence, eye contact and symbols.

The subway walls of Paris have witnessed biases, and cold shoulders/glances on account of religion, identity, transformed into strategies by now. Never has one depended so much on the other and vice versa. Still, there is a struggle for meanings in its very ambivalence they may be safe or not. They cannot return to their previous racist and fundamentalist religious state of mind. The images constructed about one another dislocate hate, resistance to a place of viable incomplete agency. Owing to the intertwined nature of emotion and silence and other trans-semiotic components, each one's notion of religion is traversed by the other in the case of the two men.

The 'untold' narrative is felt, seen, listened to, read, thought, reflected upon, translated interculturally (SANTOS, 2018) and emotionally by both characters. Indeed, they interrogate each other's religions and identities. Consequently, they co-translate meanings interculturally, seeking to decolonize themselves, with the presence of the neo-nazis.

Listening to each other's bodies, emotions, the silences of the sequence of actions, visions, sense of tact, hearings, gestures, trans-emotions and trans-silences and translating them intercultural and inter-religiously are all part of complex and contingent processes. More specifically, intercultural translation in *Strangers* occurs through listening to: a) one South to the other different South and b) two Souths and many Norths.

Both interrogate each other's religious and cultural traditions and feel the need to resist the dominants' power non-violently. From distance to proximity, from competition to collaboration, they are challenged to question their own religions, and reinvent tradition, ancestry as basis for new reformulation: to des-theorize their religions as a pre-condition for inscribing their work on intercultural translation to their needs. Unlike the neo-nazis, they creatively used non-violent strategies, resources and agency negotiated by

¹⁶ Critical interculturality foments and seeks to legitimize ontologies, epistemologies and sociocultural diversities to resist and dismantle Eurocentric autonomy and privileges. The "inter" works to disrupt and destabilize, to intercede, to interfere and intervene in the "cultural", to bring to the fore a series of issues, concerns, conflicts, tensions, struggles and t push for different engagements and articulations, particularly with regard to knowledges and life visions (WALSH; MIGNOLO 2010, p. 5). From: <http://grzinic-smid.si/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Rear2010tikulacija10111213.pdf>.

means of emotion, silence grounded on reciprocal unlearning of prejudice, and learning from each other's differences instead of assimilation.

Non-Eurocentric ideas, conceptions, religions, and anti-colonial struggles depend on counter-translanguaging, that is, changing the status of emotion and silence, ameliorating active and significant participation. Although intercultural translation is situated and heterogeneous, the risk of transforming South-South alternatives into a recipe exists. This is made possible by taking more contextual hints that emerge in the singularity of the spatiality-temporality, whose behavior resembles that of an assemblage, longing for new reconnections and resignifications. Each member of the gang interrogates, silently, both men and vice-versa, which means they all experience a process of engagement in perplexity, investigation, and in thinking of how to proceed in this navigation. The navigation as a rhizome (DELEUZE; GUATTARI, 1987) opens and reopens imaginary channels with unexpected turns, an endeavoring to engage in the qualities of trans-semiosis, emotion and silence, posing new questions/challenges for translanguaging.

Coupled with Granger's (2004) mentioning that Britzman (*apud* GRANGER, 2004, p. 109) "asks how education lives in people and, conversely, how people live within education", it is possible to recast that question in a similar vein: How does translanguaging live in/with people and people live in/with translanguaging? In the case of *Strangers*, the people on the train live translanguaging inside and outside each other, as both creators and products of a never-ending process of understanding the historical reasons why they happen to be in that particular situation, with such different people. Working with socially-ideologically informed trans-semiosis, emotion and silence makes room for the fact that they are constructed and reconstructed over and over again. For example: that hate and intolerance the Jewish and the Muslim man feel, think and read about each other in the beginning of the film is transformed into collaboration, as time goes by, due to the contingent entrance of the neo-nazis on the wagon and to the unexpected song played by the mobile phone, conceiving both of them as easy targets. The abyssal line/thinking (SANTOS, 2018) between them seems blurred from a bitter to a more reasonable relationship. Whether they are going to struggle for a more loving and caring world around them, after this challenging and memorable experience, remains unanswered.

To engage emotion, silence and meaning making in translanguaging is educationally useful to understand that it is grounded in socially driven and political relations of dominance. Nevertheless, implicit in this assumption is that the notion of agency can be brought about by the active interpreter's role. Individual perceptions, intra-personal, historical processes patently social suspend their prejudice and, therefore, their differences, temporarily.

It is possible to interpret that both characters also decolonized their translanguaging. Emotion, silence, and meaning making have permitted both actors to draw their experience while identifying the oppression, the danger and understand that they needed to use trans-semiosis and silence in affective and creative ways to learn other kinds of knowledge, ambiguity in identity reconstruction and enactment. And this gives rise to another question: How can we activate the emotions and silence within trans-semiosis in order to make meaning and produce agency otherwise in ways that are beneficial to those people in colonized situations, such as the Jewish and the Muslim men in *Strangers* or elsewhere in life?

Bringing back the body-mind-multimodality-social context to promote critical translanguaging education by advocating for diversity, dignity, and the spirit of collaboration to challenge the abyssal lines (SANTOS, 2018) seems to be a consensus among the aforementioned scholars. Separating bodies (traversed by a plurality of discourses in which silence and emotion are part of), religions, cultures, languages,

race, gender, ideologies, the way the colonial experience has ingrained in many human histories no longer makes sense. I interpret all the characters are quite aware of the existing abyssal lines have been practices throughout centuries and are context-bounded. Abyssal lines are reconfigured: first, between the Jewish and the Muslim men and then, between both of them and the neo-nazis. This is evidence that abyssal lines are mutable and in ways that it is possible to reclaim agency to legitimize knowledge, experience of those people located on the other side of the abyssal line/thought.

To suit the needs of the reconceptualization of education for present times, it is noteworthy to say that both the Jewish and the Muslim's bodies get entangled to the extent that it disturbed the neo-nazis. Their universalized ontoepistemology and experience 'migrated' into the train and was contested and undermined, evincing that power can/should be displaced. Approximating their boundaries, where the affordances of available resources and repertoires could be somehow shifted and deployed in less deterministic ways, permitted the minority men to fall back on relationality, connectivity and envisage possibilities rather than imprisonment in consolidated Eurocentric world views and ways of being.

A grass-root initiative is expected. This entails running risks, which is a significant characteristic of translanguaging, instead of being a doctrine. Even in situations when people judge each other by shared knowledge, emotion, silence and meaning making in the encounter with differences, ambiguity gets in the way. Permeable boundaries between conceptions of religion, race, identity, class, gender, age, nationality, to name a few examples in intersected mode, might challenge the hegemony of standardized language practice in society as a whole, and legitimize translanguaging, which, in turn, might also decolonize the prevalence of verbal language policies in classes, in evaluation systems, in public defense of Master dissertations and PhD theses, in public examinations, making more room for social justice.

5 To finish the conversation

The partial results of my ongoing research have suggested translanguaging is not yet broadly known and/or experimented with as an educational routine. Moreover, it is not present in official Brazilian documents for language education policies and curricula. The great majority of my undergraduate students majoring in Portuguese and English have not particularly understood the meaning of translanguaging so far. I have argued that this also means another reason to rethink emotion and silence in translanguaging. *Strangers* invites and challenges viewers not to underestimate these two components within translanguaging in dialogue with decolonial and Southern perspectives, grounded on incessant intercultural translations of the very perceptions of emotions and silence. The entanglement of emotion and silence within trans-semiosis constitute a relevant contribution to translanguaging studies. Even within translanguaging, some modes may be more dominant than others and recolonize meaning making. This article might provide students and researchers with tools to expand their interpretations, meaning making towards social justice through the creative reconciliation with situated ontoepistemologies, diverse repertoires and forces, something apparently impossible for the current entangled times-spaces.

This text has sought to focus on translanguaging recognizing the fact that depending on the way emotion and silence are performed and interpreted, their effects might promote exclusion, oppres-

sion, segregation in diverse degrees mainly for subjects already positioned as second-class citizens by the Eurocentric colonial structure. Strangers brought evidence that emotion and silence operates within other trans-semiotic components, and the context is paramount to expand meaning making in ways to benefit less empowered people.

In order to decolonize the universality of fixed categories, such as religion, identity, race, ethnics, class, age, geographical origin, among others, bottom-up forms of agency are called for as such complex societal implications render challenging enactments to dismantle the colonial matrix of power, as Quijano (2007) has argued. This alternative is one among many, and this article has also purported to highlight it.

Complex emotion, silence and meaning making in the realm of translanguaging towards social justice was tackled through an analysis of *Strangers*. Social justice presupposes decentering verbal language (oral and written modes) to accommodate other forms of expressions. This calls for further studies on silence and emotion embedded in relations of power addressing religion, identity, race, class, gender, geographical origin, as pivotal for people to delve deeply into such themes and make a move to try to transform oppressive historical and collective conditions, in which they might be immersed, as illustrated in the film in question.

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