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Emerging translingual praxiologies in three English teacher professional development contexts in the Brazilian Midwest

Praxiologias translíngues emergentes em três contextos de desenvolvimento profissional de professores de inglês no Centro-Oeste brasileiro

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ABSTRACT: In this article, we explore our attempts to infuse the classes we teach with our emergent translingual praxiologies. We describe this process in three educational contexts: an undergraduate English major course, a graduate course in Linguistics, and an in-service course for public school English teachers, all in the Midwest region of Brazil. To do so, we use qualitative, interpretive research through personal narratives. For us, translingual understandings emphasize language as fluid, negotiable, and creative, in contrast to monolingual orientations that hold languages to be discrete, fixed, and finite. Such ideas hold potential for developing (de)colonial approaches to linguistic education, which value diverse ways of knowing and being that potentially enhance life across the globe.

KEYWORDS: Translingual praxiologies; (De)coloniality; English teacher professional development; Brazil.

RESUMO: Neste artigo, exploramos nossas tentativas de infundir nossas aulas com praxiologias translíngues emergentes. Descrevemos esse processo em três contextos educacionais: um curso de graduação em inglês, um curso de pós-graduação em linguística e um curso de formação para professores de inglês de escolas públicas, todos na região Centro-Oeste do Brasil. Para esse fim, utilizamos a pesquisa qualitativa e interpretativa por relatos pessoais. Para nós, os entendimentos translíngues enfatizam a lingua(gem) como

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fluida, negociável e criativa em contraste com as orientações monolíngues que mantêm as línguas como discretas, fixas e finitas. Tais ideias têm potencial para desenvolver abordagens (de)coloniais para a educação linguística, que valorizam diversas formas de conhecer e ser que potencialmente melhoram a vida em todo o mundo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVES: Praxiologias translíngues; (De)colonialidade; Formação de Professores de Inglês; Brasil.

> The translanguaging orientation is [...] an alternative to think about language practices in contemporaneity and that brings to the center of reflection, the unfoldings of postmodern globalization in teaching and teacher education (SANTO; SANTOS, 2018, p. 161)

1 Introduction

In this paper, we describe our attempts to infuse critical linguistic education with translingual praxiologies. Based on XXX (2021), we understand praxiology as the integration of our worldviews, theories from the field of Applied Linguistics and beyond, our practices, our desires, etc. In this way, it expands on Freire's (1970) interpretation of the Greek term praxis, by not only integrating reflection and practice for social change, but also bringing to the fore how our unique experiences, desires, feelings etc. contribute to our linguistic education projects. We choose to spell *praxiologies* with an *i* instead of an *e (praxeology)*, which is the form found in most English language dictionaries, as a way to emphasize our positioning in the Global South and our dialogue with Freire. We use the term *translingual praxiologies* to highlight our emergent translingual orientations to language in this process of perpetual becoming (Freire, 1994). shaped by as well as shaping society intent on living in a way that is more just, less violent, and that promotes physical, emotional, spiritual, political and intellectual health. The wounds of coloniality are gaping, even decades and centuries after the European governments were replaced by local governing and administrative bodies in South America and around the world. In a step towards healing, the current text is a collaborative contribution towards the changes we want to live.

Imagined categories, binaries, and hierarchies of race, gender, sexuality, religion, economic standing, languages, etc. form the intellectual foundations of our society. This colonial way of thinking about the people, other animals, and living and nonliving things around us is central to formal schooling, generally, and linguistic education, specifically. As a society, humans perpetuate various forms of symbolic violence, often unknowingly (Bordieu, 1989). For example, in Brazil, we are immersed in deeply embedded linguistic ideologies that reify idealized standards as the only legitimate forms of language, which excludes those who do not conform from full access to economic, educational, and social opportunities. As Rocha (2019) points out, "Cultural domination and social, linguistic, cultural, political and economic deprivation are intrinsically connected." (p. 15)[1]

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[1] Original: "A dominação cultural e a situação de desfavorecimento social, linguístico, cultural, político e econômico encontram-se intrinsecamente interligadas."

Within Brazil's political boundaries, there are speakers of hundreds of languages, yet, through efficient colonial projects over the past 500-plus years (Veronelli, 2015), we now have established a "monolingual, monolithic, and monological" (Rocha, 2019, p. 21) tradition that inferiorized languages other than Portuguese and either relegates them to minority status or, in many cases, eliminated them altogether (Santo; Santos, 2018). This coloniality of language is especially evident in the long-standing and widespread practice of including sections that focus on prescriptive grammar norms in standardized tests for civil service positions, college admissions, etc. Such evaluation procedures have a profound washback effect as many public and private schools develop their curriculum towards students' success in this arena. Despite the Brazilian National Curriculum Base (BNCC) recently promoting a more diverse and performative concept of language (Brasil, 2018), in the collective experience of the three authors, almost all formal Brazilian linguistic educational contexts continue to base their curricula, to varying degrees, on monolingual and structuralist understandings of language. Here, we use the term "monolingual" in reference to understandings of languages as discrete, fixed and finite[2] (Canagarajah, 2013), goods that can be *acquired*. Efforts to enforce this myth through standardization, under the guise of *practicality*, and economic development, have been extremely successful. More than fifty years after the publication of Paulo Freire's seminal work *Pedagogia do Oprimido* (Pedagogy of the Oppressed) (1970) and its scathing critique of the destructive banking model of education, this approach holds fast on a national scale.

We agree with Rocha (2019) that the translingual turn in applied linguistics, and its reconceptualization of language, holds promise for confronting our coloniality.Along those lines, Canagarajah (2013) convincingly asserts that people are not monolingual, we all have multiple linguistic and meaning-making repertoires that we draw on according to a variety of contextual factors. In other words, language is fluid, negotiable, and creative. Any attempts to quantify and codify "languages" can be understood as artificial and arbitrary (Makoni; Pennycook, 2006)[3]. When we use a label for a language and create standards for it, we artificially unify speakers who are along a spectrum of languaging practices and linguistic identities. A translingual stance is a pluralistic orientation to language that emphasizes practice, positioning, and process instead of form, function, or products. This shifts the focus of linguistic education from promoting conformity to external norms to developing strategies for dealing with communicative diversity. In contrast, emphasis on judging language use by one's ability to conform to external standards is wrought with prejudice. Canagarajah (2013) demonstrates that monolingual orientations "treat certain languages as owned by and natural to certain communities when languages are in fact open to being adopted by diverse communities for their own purposes" (p. 8). Identity performance and language are intertwined (Butler, 2011), and we imbue what we call "English" or "Portuguese" with profound importance to who we are, but such labels do not point to entities grounded in any ontological status. Santo and Santos (2018) add that monolingual understandings of language serve commercial and political ends rather than represent who people really are or what we really do[4]. Collectively, these ideas remit to the epigraph and the interaction of diverse peoples across time and space on an unprecedented scale in contemporary society.

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[2] An anonymous reviewer astutely pointed out that, "'finite' closes off the role of coinage, the invention of new words, which contributes to neoliberal/colonial myths of English as the language of technological and economic progress." We agree and highlight here that while the legacy of colonial ways of knowing encourages us to simplify the world into finite, attainable categories, this very approach is constantly being undermined by complexity, paradoxically contradicting itself.

[3] The same anonymous reviewer mentioned in footnote 3 reminds us not to forget that there have been movements to codify non-prestige varieties of languages such as AAVE/Ebonics in the United States and "Indigenized Englishes" in Canada, in what can be described as strategic essentialisms. While we recognize the value of such to legitimize the experience of people with vulnerable and discriminated linguistic and racial identities, even when codified, they still represent idealizations. Moreover, such attempts are generated through colonial methods that we are trying to push back on. Our intent is to engage and legitimize linguistic diversity even further, for potentially deeper social change.

This article is organized as follows: In the next section, we describe aspects of translingual research in Brazil and continue to define the construct translanguaging. In the third section, we engage with how personal narratives can contribute to a deeper understanding of linguistic education. In the fourth section, we heed Rocha's (2019) call to tell our stories of translingual praxiologies in linguistic education. In the fifth section, we discuss our experiences in relation to broader movements related to transforming and (de) colonizing[5] linguistic education. In the further considerations section, we present potential implications of this study for linguistic education in professional development contexts.

2 Translingual orientations as a research focus in Brazil

> If translanguaging is a (linguistic and education related) practice and also an orientation, we can assume that we are always, to a greater or lesser degree, and in different ways, translanguaging. (ROCHA, 2019, p. 25)[6]

The Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior – CAPES) maintains a database of academic journals to support research projects in Brazil. This source presents 22 results of Brazilian articles that include the terms "translinguagem" and "translíngue", in their titles, from 2017 to 2022. We highlight five of these that demonstrate a breadth of educational contexts and theories, such as policies (Santos; Santos, 2018), deaf students (Dias *et al.*, 2017), bilingual education (Lucena; Cardoso, 2018), multimodal texts (Takaki, 2019) and decolonial approaches (Rocha, 2019).

Santo and Santos (2018) explore policies that were foundational in Brazil becoming a territory in which monolingual ideologies are widespread. Specifically, they cite the invention of Brazilian Portuguese and its imposition as the only legitimate national language and the systematic suppression of the thousands of other (mostly indigenous) languages. Three examples they highlight are Marquês de Pombal's "Diretório dos Índios" (1758), Decree 1.545 in 1939 by the Vargas administration, and the Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação (LDB) n. 5692/71, which was instituted during Brazil's military dictatorship. Meanwhile, they acknowledge the arbitrary and imaginary nature of what we call "languages" by putting the word in quotation marks. Their text offers a rich reflection on the theoretical precarity of monolingual orientations to language as well as their destructiveness in our contemporary society, the latter of which features increasingly fluid identities and relationships through multisemiotic repertoires. As an alternative, they delve into translingual orientations, a shift in vision from "languages" to linguistic resources, with their potential for "descolonial" (p. 153) movements in contexts of linguistic education. For Santo and Santos, important characteristics of this include, as a starting point, thinking of language as practice rather than product, a fundamental element in our process of becoming. Beyond that, they demonstrate the value of classroom activities that explore the impact of trans semiotic texts.

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[4] In another observation from an anonymous reviewer, we are reminded to be weary of how multi/translingual understandings can also be coopted for commercial and political ends.

[5] We opt to use parentheses here to recognize that while we decry the damaging effects of coloniality, and are pushing back against it in our praxiologies, we are immersed in it and cannot escape from it; trying to overcome our own coloniality is a perpetual struggle that often involves making concessions.

[6] Original: "Se a translinguagem é uma prática (de linguagens e educativa) e também uma orientação, podemos assumir que estejamos sempre, em maior ou menor grau, e de diferentes modos, translinguando."

Dias *et al*. (2017) use a translingual orientantion to show that social media are spaces where deaf students can build and expand meaning through multisemiotic resources, for example written Portuguese in combination with emoticons, set phrases provided by the platforms, images, and reposts. While the authors assert that digital technology has made borders obsolete and they represent language as fundamentally creative, negotiated, and diverse, they also explain participants' use of written Portuguese in relation to standard norms. In this text, they describe the importance of the negotiation of meaning as a process of the teacher understanding the context and the deaf students' intentions in order to show them how to use Portuguese (in this case grammatical agreement and prepositions) adequately. In our view, this is just one aspect of the potential that negotiation of meaning brings to interactions. In fact, we take exception to the idea that it is assumed that there is a discrete, "adequate" form for Portuguese and that the teacher is the one who knows it. Still, we understand that the translingual turn in applied linguistics is in its nascent stages, so it is not surprising that there are conflicting beliefs and understandings of it.[7]

Lucena and Cardoso (2018) explore language practices in a bilingual school during math and history classes and problematize the use of translanguaging as a valuable pedagogical resource. According to the authors, the translingual orientations make it possible for bilingual schools to understand the relationship between language not as competitive but as strategies to enhance communicative experiences from the use of the entire linguistic semiotic repertoire of the students in the process of building meanings. The authors argue that the students' agency makes them use elements of different languages as a form of resistance. Thus, students engaged in "linguistic negotiation as a way of renegotiating languages and cultures and appropriating them for strategic purposes in their own contexts" (Lucena; Cardoso, 2018, p. 147).

Takaki (2019) reports on translingual and multimodal practices in a community outreach project for public secondary students about critical linguistic education. While engaging with themes related to migration and the implications of the teaching of English, these practices enhanced students' engagement, creativity, critical stance, and ethics.

Rocha (2019) traces a theoretical discussion of translingual orientations and ties them to decolonial projects. Her primary assertion is that any such endeavor must start with an undermining of understandings of the human experiences founded on categories and hierarchies, and translingual orientations do just that in relation to language. She believes in their potential to build educational policies founded on and for dialogue and the public good. Furthermore, she promotes an understanding of language in more fluid terms, as a verb: performances embedded in our identities, generators of meaning and grammars, practices rather than products. Languaging is foundational to who we are in our perpetual process of becoming: an immeasurably dynamic process, wrought with conflict and negotiation as we wield our evolving linguistic resources and repertoires, embedded in ecological contexts, with their corresponding affordances.

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[7] As an anonymous reviewer noted, this includes comparison and contrast with concepts such as plurilingualism, code-meshing/switching, metro linguistics, polylanguaging.

Each of the above texts makes unique contributions to our understandings of translingual orientations and their relation to (de)colonial intellectual movements in Brazil. It is important to point out that we understand (de)coloniality as agentive movements, and we are inspired by Rezende (Rezende et al., 2020) when they state that “decoloniality is not a theory; it is a confrontational stance that modifies the interpretation of theories.” (p. 20). In this vein, we do not reduce translingual practice to code-switching, but view it as a way of positioning ourselves to language otherwise that runs through our praxiologies. Additionally, we understand translingual praxiologies as a break with authoritarian, teacher-centered, monolingual orientations, which descend from European colonial projects and their positivist world views. “Languages” are myths, what is recorded in dictionaries or grammar guides is an idealization by a person or group, often after great discord and concessions. These written references may make claims to “common” usage, but we have to ask, common among whom? What are the consequences of such for those whose identities deviate from such standards? To embrace linguistic diversity, translingual orientations demand a high degree of pedagogical innovation and creativity. Rather than put all of our efforts into hopelessly trying to keep languages separate, we focus on developing strategies for negotiating meaning, dispositions towards flexible repertoires, and linguistic dexterity. Canagarajah (2013) encourages us to make a shift from the product (idealized standards) to the process (communicative strategies and negotiation) in specific ecological contexts. In this sense, Takaki (2019, p. 170) defends that “translanguaging has to be stimulated to enable communication with the appreciation of students’ semiotic resources and creativity and ecological repertoires”. With that in mind, we authors ask, in our language teacher professional development contexts, how do we position ourselves towards the idealization of standard languages? How do we attempt to problematize the concept of language and its representations? How is such positioning reflected in course content, activities, evaluation procedures, etc.? Such questions hold potential for developing (de)colonial approaches to linguistic education, which value diverse ways of knowing and being that enhance what it means to be alive, rather than suppress non-Eurocentric ontologies and epistemologies. In the coming paragraphs, we present some of our educational processes through engaging in personal narratives from three diverse educational contexts. But first, we summarize how narratives can be valuable to educational research.

3 Engaging in autobiographical narratives

To explore our experiences attempting to infuse the classes we teach with our emergent translingual praxiologies, in an undergraduate English major course, a graduate course in Linguistics, and an in-service course for public school English teachers, in the Midwest region of Brazil, we use qualitative, interpretive research (Denzin; Lincoln, 2013) through personal narratives. According to the pioneers of narrative inquiry research Connely and Clandinin (1990), such reflections allow us to understand and interpret aspects of being human far beyond closed questions and statistics, especially concerning how to teach and learn. Research participants, researchers, and readers all generate deeper understandings of their experience and that of others, through the narrative process. Yet, according to Blommaert (2005), “[narrative] has often been overlooked as a format of knowledge production and reproduction because of its deep context-embeddedness, its often ‘irrational’ or emotive key, and its connection to non-generalizable individual experience" (p. 84). We see these aspects of it not as shortcomings, but as assets in alternative approaches to knowledge construction and possibilities for what Zamudio *et al*. (2011) describe as "competing claims to long-standing ideologies (such as color blindness, meritocracy, liberalism, cultural deficiency, etc.)" (p. 118).

Our intention is to make visible, and problematize the everyday, commonplace, taken-for-granted activities involved in linguistic education (Linn; Erickson, 1990), while engaging deeply with our experiences and making further sense of them (Denzin; Lincoln, 2013). In contrast to the cause-and-effect approach of traditional, positivist methods, our objective is not to make generalizations, but to generate experiential artifacts with the intention of encouraging growth and transformation, both for ourselves and readers (Clandinin; Connelly, 1994).

As teacher education is directly linked to teachers' lives, we understand that narrative is a valuable way to engage with our practices and the educational landscape (Clandinin; Connelly, 2004). In accordance with Flannery (2015, p. 40), autobiographical narratives can be seen as "a story that helps define the identities of the narrators, offering a coherent version of how they came to be in their current position"[8]. Clandinin and Connelly (2015) assert that narrative inquiry focuses on the process of discovery and rediscovery about ourselves in our perpetual process of coming to new understandings. In the case of the text at hand, through its creation, the three of us collaboratively restructure and reinterpret fundamental aspects of our life stories. Using the model established by Souza, Murta and Bengezen (2020), for this project, we generate narratives of our teaching contexts in relation to our understandings, desires, and emotions as they influence our translingual/(de)colonial praxiologies and that contribute to our processes of becoming.

Meanwhile, it is important to recognize that our actions are not always in sync with our beliefs and desires, and our beliefs and desires themselves can and should shift as we learn and grow, so our lives do not always fit neatly into a traditional narrative structure (Emerson et al., 1995). We aim to embrace this ambiguity and messiness. Furthermore, this collaborative co-authored text allows for us to make meaning together from our unique linguistic experiences (Clandinin; Connelly, 2000). We are hopeful that our research approach may be as therapeutic for ourselves and our readers as our translingual praxiologies are for each of us.

In the following section, we each build a personal narrative of our emergent translingual orientations in our separate educational contexts: an undergraduate English major course, a graduate course in Linguistics, and an in-service course for public school English teachers, all in the Midwestern region of Brazil.

4 Emerging translingual praxiologies in three English teacher professional development contexts in the Brazilian Midwest

We present below our results as personal narratives of how we approach linguistic education in three specific English teacher professional development contexts in which we carry out parts of our life projects. In the following subsections, we shift to the first person singular *I*, to share our individual experiences.

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[8] Original: "um relato que auxilia na definição das identidades dos narradores, oferecendo uma versão coerente sobre por que e como eles se encontram nas posições atuais".

4.1 Translanguage orientations and (de)colonial movements in an undergraduate English course in the Brazilian capital

Since my days as an undergraduate student in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States, I have been involved in the long, sometimes arduous, sometimes exhilarating process of generating new comprehensions of language and linguistic education. One theoretical turning point for me happened as a graduate student at the University of Washington. I started my degree in a Master of Arts for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (MATESOL) the same year that Suhanthie Motha arrived there as an Assistant Professor of English. Her 2012 co-authored manuscript on translingual identity as pedagogy brought together a series of reflections on possibilities for critical, anti-racist pedagogies in applied linguistics, for social change, especially in the field of TESOL. In this section, I relate how this approach to linguistic education has translated into my work with a writing class for undergraduate English majors at one of Brazil's flagship research universities.

English majors at the University of Brasília (UnB) are mostly women and come from diverse social backgrounds. In the past, the Brazilian public university system was very limited and its campuses were almost exclusively inhabited by the country's economically privileged. Most English majors had grown up going to private schools and taking extracurricular language classes. Since the early 2000s and the implementation of Brazil's national affirmative action program at universities, of which UnB was a pioneer, more students from the region's socio-economically marginalized communities have gained access to higher education. Today, most of the pre-service English teachers in the classes I am responsible for live in Brasília's economically underprivileged suburbs and take long bus trips to and from campus. In questionnaires I use to get to know the groups' interests and desires, many students report feeling insecure about their oral and written fluency and a desire to improve their grammar and vocabulary. In the same questionnaires, I ask them about how they feel about my own anti-racist, (de)colonial, social justice goals for linguistic education and they overwhelmingly express support and agreement with these desires.

Some of the foundational understandings that I bring to the process of leading the classes are to front the idea that I am part of the learning community and growing with the group as I guide it. I identify deeply with Paulo Freire's assertion that teaching is learning (2004). Professor and students are all engaged in a process of intellectual, social, academic, spiritual, emotional, and professional self- and collective-realization. While we are all English majors, and current and (presumably) future teachers, our experiences and life goals are diverse. I don't take for granted that I know something that the students need to know in order to become who they want to be. I understand that my primary role is to get to know them and support them in the process. As I write this, it seems simple, but represents a seismic shift with my own linguistic education experience at a liberal arts college in the United States.

Besides the way I try to position myself in my teaching role, another key element of the classes are my attempts at establishing a translingual orientation to language as the baseline for the syllabus. To me, this means emphasizing language as performed, a process not a product. The way we language (Canagarajah, 2013) is dynamic, fluid, and flexible, depending on our experiences, worldviews, cognition, anatomy, etc.

Idealized standards are only one aspect of the linguistic experience and how and why we conform to such norms is as diverse as who we are as people. It is my intention that this understanding of language permeates the linguistic educational experience. I grew up believing that we had to keep languages separate in our brains. I now see this understanding as not just unrealistic, but damaging: a perpetuation of positivist and white supremacist worldviews, by which I mean that European colonial projects codified and standardized not only languages but racial categories and hierarchies, delegitimizing and dehumanizing the peoples and cultures whose lands they invaded and conquered (Nascimento, 2019); today racism can be described as the nervous system of society (Santos, 2022). Languages are not quantifiable and any attempts at establishing firm limits between them are doomed to failure.

As a platform for the groups' writing practices, I start with the theme of linguistic identity and prejudice. My intention is to encourage critical reflections on language and society while dealing with our experiences and understandings in their complexity, ambiguity, and contradictions. I believe this might help us all deal with linguistic and social challenges and successes, as well as everything in between. At the same time, we deconstruct the "native" speaker construct and emphasize the value of linguistic diversity in the identities of studenteachers and teacherstudents[9]. Part of this is openly confronting my own privileges as a white man from the United States and my desires to undermine such for the collective health of society.

The class readings and videos are reflections on this theme, imbued with the spirit of social justice, by women authors of color, such as: Amy Tan (1990), Gloria Anzaldúa (1987), and Jamila Lyiscott (2014). They all relate their complex linguistic identities and different types of linguistic and racial discrimination they have faced, and, in some cases, committed. These everyday prejudiced interactions they describe are ones that are easy for readers to imagine, yet their negative, destructive impact often goes unperceived. The authors demonstrate that the human linguistic experience cannot be distilled to standards and norms, it is one of diversity, creation, and negotiation. The complex stories they share are erased by discourses of national identities that emphasize one territory, one language, one culture. Their experiences are a springboard for the groups to reflect on both the discrimination that we have been the target of and that which we have perpetuated on others, and what, as language studenteachers and teacherstudents, we can do differently.

In order to engage in these reflections, I propose activities that emphasize collaboration, intellectual autonomy, and negotiation through group work, self-evaluations, self-reviews, and peer-reviews of written texts. During the process, one of my favorite phrases to use is that "our texts are never finished, only abandoned" because every time we reread what we write, we make changes, as we have changed since the last time we did so. In other words, each time we revisit a text, we generate a new version of it. Instead of looking at the text in terms of how well it conforms to idealized standards and vocabulary norms, I encourage students to engage with the ideas, the arguments. The deadlines and evaluation criteria are negotiable. Furthermore, I do my best to undermine an environment of individual competition and emphasize collective empathy and collaboration.

In relation to evaluation, because I see languaging as a process, I create a correspondence between activities completed and points, and offer individual and collective comments and suggestions, rather than grant points for "accuracy". Because of my belief that language is not quantifiable, I try to avoid "correcting" students, instead I encourage them to negotiate the meaning-making process internally, with me, and with each other. Each week there are writing activities that lead to a complete essay and all are weighted similarly to emphasize the process and divert attention and pressure from any one product. For the linguistic work we do, I ask them to take note of the linguistic challenges and success they experienced during the weekly reading and writing process. In this way, rather than me telling them what they need to know or improve, according to my own idealization of academic English repertoires, they make the decisions about their learning path according to their immediate linguistic needs.

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[9] I combine these words in this way to show their interconnectedness, while also acknowledging that both have different institutional roles and responsibilities.

While the scope of this article does not allow for an in-depth discussion of each of these elements of my emerging translingual praxiologies (though I intend to do so in a forthcoming article in another venue), I would like to conclude this section by expressing that students have reacted extremely positively. They report, both in class and in their self-evaluations, that the experience is challenging and rewarding and that they feelive great intellectual growth.

4.2 Translanguaging orientations in a graduate course in Linguistics and research

My contact with translingual orientations began in 2014 with reading García and Wei's seminal book Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education and in my stay as a visiting professor in the Department of Applied Linguistics and African Studies at Penn State University in 2019, in which I had interaction with the academic research groups of Prof. Sinfree B. Makoni and Suresh Canagarajah. Such contact motivated me to work and develop scientific projects in the area of Critical Applied Linguistics (Pennycook, Makoni, 2019) and contribute to the transformation of vulnerable communities through a (de)colonial, agentive, emancipatory, and planetary education, which, in turn, is based on a social doing that is consistent with the Ubuntu philosophy. Application of the translanguaging approach in the context of ubuntu practices (i.e. Ubuntu translanguaging) provides policy makers with a cultural measure to question the validity of language boundaries and redraw the linguistic map from a fluid position. Within the logic of Ubuntu translanguaging, notions such as first language, mother tongue and second language are questioned as these do not account for complex translingual discourse practices in many Brazilian contexts, including language teacher education.

In a 2022 graduate class for a course in Linguistics, I had 45 (forty-five) students coming from different parts of Brazil, most of them Portuguese and a variety of foreign languages, and there was one deaf student. Because we do not have a language policy to promote and value sign language and deaf culture in Brazil, the vast majority of the students enrolled were unfamiliar with the latter. Among the participants were the coauthors of this text, one as a colleague auditing the class and the other as one of my doctoral student advisees. I aligned our work with a (de)colonial perspective in order to (re)think critically about the conception and social representations of language that we had and held; and we started to problematize whether the translingual orientations would be a promising path to a critical language education. And, to my surprise, the group soundly embraced the endeavor and we started to materialize the discipline from translingual orientations, based on readings by researchers from the Global South.

In this class, we created pedagogical activities aimed at building (de)colonial praxiologies, from a translingual orientation, which contributed greatly to the (re)signification of the knowledge that was constructed in the language classroom. I encourage this because my life project aims to overcome the compartmentalization of knowledge and the barriers between the non-scientific and the scientific, discussing the variability of meaning conventions of the various socio-cultural situations in which racial minorities interact. I envision pedagogical actions within the walls (conversation rounds and multimodal language workshops) of the graduate school culminating in the realization of webinars and other academic events, whose results reverberate in the (re)critical thinking of the curricula of public schools, aiming at anti-racist education and enhanced equity. The themes of class stand on the following tripod: intercultural dialogue, transdisciplinary and translingual learning, and participative permanence in school.

Throughout the course, we explored ways that translanguaging practices are performative by nature, as they are creative, critical, strategic, and flexible, situated amid spaces of tension and rupture, open to destabilization and transformation. In their complexity, translanguagings imbricate themselves in discourses and ideologies that can, in a restrictive guise, serve neoliberal discourses, and, on the other hand, assume more expansive forms that potentially break up more authoritarian and oppressive modes of discourse and life. While students widely embraced translingual orientations, some expressed difficulty in imagining such beyond an openness to code-meshing.

The academic readings suggested for the course were from authors and researchers carried out in the Global South, and that had the (de)colonial perspective as a base and the translanguaging as a construct still in evolution. Thought of in the context of bilingual education, as a way of confronting monolithic and rationalist visions of language, subject and culture, translanguaging has been evidenced as a paradigmatic rupture in the field of Language Studies, expanding the notion of communication beyond words and individual or named languages, in favor of processes and practices of meaning construction, ideologically and historically situated and ecologically constituted. Aligned with the ideas of post-structuralism, the notion of translanguaging is linked to ideologies and (educational) practices that support the struggle for equity and social justice in its various aspects, while celebrating linguistic, cultural, identity, and political mobility, mixing, and dynamics under a more plural, open, and transgressive lens.

Thanks to my involvement in the implementation of a Critical Collaborative Research project in public schools located in socio-economically vulnerable communities of the Federal District of Brazil already carried out in 2011-2021, I have experience in both identifying the subsidies necessary to question (and break) the paradigms of reproduction of racial inequalities still rooted in schools and promoting a transdisciplinary reformulation that de-encapsulates school curricula, centered on parameters that critically articulate the disciplinary contents to the knowledge that comes from the reality of the communities, crossed by black as well as other non-dominant cultures. This stance is central to the graduate classes I facilitate.

I am deeply concerned and motivated to overcome the unsatisfactory results of policies proposed by different spheres of public management of Language Education in the Global South and Global North, in order to offer equitable educational and cultural opportunities for young people of different races. My studies and the pedagogical praxiologies operate in the direction of the construction of the unpredictable, as proposed by Freire (1970). In other words, it is a project that focuses on creating a foundation to go beyond the limiting situations posed by the immediate reality, whose strength lies in attainable, yet still unknown solutions. This condition presupposes the critical immersion of individuals in their known realities and a broad immersion in multiple contexts of understanding, which broaden their horizons of perception. Therefore, I envision “individuals immersed in reality, with the pure sensibility of their needs, emerge from it and, thus, gain the reason for the needs” (Freire, 1970, p. 111).

4.3 Translingual and (de)colonial movements in an in-service professional development course

During my days in the graduate degree in an interdisciplinary Master course of Language, Technology and Education in 2015, at State University of Goiás, Brazil, I started reading about interculturality, and different ways to use our cultural, linguistic and semiotic repertoires in social practices. That view engaged my life project of seeing the other, negotiating meanings, in a search for more democratic interactions. Hence, at a doctoral class, in 2018, professor Tânia Rezende presented me the term translanguaging, and a possible orientation which deals with language in a flexible, fluid and respectful way.

My experience as an English teacher involves primary school, high school, and undergraduate levels. Nowadays, I am working with in-service public school English language teachers in a continuing education context. Our Teacher Education Center for the state of Goiás (locally known as Centro de Formação de Profissionais da Educação de Goiás – CEPFOR) hosts the Goiás State English Language Teacher Study Group (Grupo de Estudos de Professoras/es de Língua Inglesa do estado de Goiás – GEPLIGO). It is a cooperative extension course between the Federal University of Goiás, the State University of Goiás and CEPFOR. My role in the group is to represent CEPFOR as support for the two Coordinators, who are from each of the respective universities.

The objective of the study group is to provide a space for dialogue between primary and secondary school teachers of English, who work in public schools (municipal and state) so that we can collaboratively expand our conceptions and actions on linguistic education. The virtual meetings are organized around reading and discussion of academic texts and videos. During the sessions, the group shares pedagogical experiences, lesson plans, activities, and other pedagogical materials related to English language education. The collective discusses themes of interest to the group, such as formal schooling, translanguaging, conceptions of language, construction of pedagogical material, critical language education, literature and language teaching, and multimodality, that challenge us to negotiate (dissensus and consensus) critical reflections on society, education, and language (Souza, 2011).

The readings, podcasts and videos are reflections on those themes by Critical Applied Linguistic authors such as: Ideas to think about the end of school (Coscarelli, 2020), Podcast School for everyone? Social inequalities and education (2021); Translanguage: Recommendations for educators (Yip; García, 2017); Podcast “Translanguaging: What is it and how it can engage a critical teaching?” (Translanguaging, 2021); Meanings of language in English classes at an Art course (Pessoa; Bastos, 2017); Beyoncé turned black: women empowerment and critical literacy in teacher education (Mulik; Edmundo, 2018); video Equilibrium hope: critical language education in search of connections in remote teaching (Mesa, 2021); Reading and writing poems in English: collaborative practices at a Brazilian public school (Melo, 2019); Multimodal narratives and production of meaning about racism and prejudice: student agency in English classes (Sabota; Peixoto; Faria, 2021). They relate to translingual and critical language education. The authors’ experiences focus on diversity, meanings negotiation, autonomy, agency, emotions and desires for social justice.

One of the strengths of the group is the code-meshing, a central element of translingual practice, in our interactions. Code meshing involves the intentional integration of more than one language within writing “in a way that frees students to exercise identity and agency within their language use” (Lee;

Handsfield, 2018, p. 3). Participants value their diverse language repertoires and linguistic dexterity. Yet, one challenge we face is how to move away from the idea of the existence of a model of English to be reached. Some teachers feel insecure and say and write things like “my English is not good!”, “I need to improve my pronunciation!” at the end of their contributions. This despite the coordinators of the group’s explicit translingual orientations. They invite the in-service teachers to consider that languages are an invention and there is not only one way to speak English (Canagarajah, 2013). For example, when one participant made a presentation, she said that it is a challenge for her to work in high school, but she is learning, and she apologized for not being very good in pronunciation. At that moment, one of the coordinators said that is not a problem, because we are in the study group to talk about our practices, and the more we speak English, the better we become, and we can use all the repertoire we have.[10]

Another strength is the sharing of participants’ praxis, through which we support the development of a more positive and self-confident conception of their identities as English teachers. The discussions enhance the pedagogical possibilities to adopt critical literacies. For example, one participant shared that she had so many troubles with her students’ engagement, and through study group’s sessions, she started to talk about their experiences, their daily routines, and did not focus on grammar structures. The result was more interactions in class. In GEPLIGO, all of us are agents in knowledge building. The evaluation is a process which happens along the virtual meetings, once collaboratively the group chooses the texts and decides the activities. The collective is a locus of problematizing experiences and stress the importance of including the multiplicity of repertoires to negotiate meanings.

5 (De)colonizing language and emergent translingual understandings

> [A]s they involve critical and creative dimensions [of linguistic education] (Li Wei, 2011), translingual spaces reveal their transcolonial nature, allowing for a break with hegemonic thought.[11] (ROCHA, 2019, p. 24)

The previous sections of this text present a process of ongoing dialogue and mutual growth and identity construction among the three authors as we continue to collaborate with each other’s praxiologies. Our readings about (de)coloniality and translingual orientations in relation to linguistic education, and our methodological ethics influence the stories we told here, as we (re)think language and education (Rocha, 2019).

In our narratives, we engaged in analysis and confronted theories (Resende, 2020) as part of our efforts at making (de)colonial moves (Pessoa, 2018). In this section, we expand on these individual reflections to analyze where our praxiologies on these contexts converge and where they diverge, with some thoughts on why. We highlight here the challenges and rewards of how our attempts to flatten hierarchies and value ecologies of knowing (Süssekind; Santos, 2016) can enhance linguistic education that develop empathy and a disposition to difference (Canagajarah, 2013). All of this while immersed in the coloniality of contemporary Brazilian society with widespread manifestations of cultural and physical violence, especially linguistic racism (Nascimento, 2019) and monolingual language ideologies in Santo and Santos (2018). In different ways, and from different positionalities, the three of us authors attempt to "refute perspectives that dichotomize the world and human relations" (Rocha, 2019, p. 28) through our emergent translingual orientations to language and the ways those stances influence everything we do in the teaching contexts that we have described. All three of us attempt to position ourselves in relation to our students in ways that flatten traditional institutional hierarchies by focusing on the negotiation of meaning within a specific socio-historical context, while getting to know students and their individual goals, feelings, challenges, strengths, and needs (Dias et al., 2017). Meanwhile, we authors engage with our emerging translingual orientations to help cultivate students' own engagement, creativity, critical stance and ethics (Takaki, 2019). We also align in the radical readings and the activities we propose, as we infuse our choices with a sense of social justice. The three of us are in agreement with Lucena and Cardoso (2018) in relation to the potential for translingual understandings to potentialize resistance and negotiated appropriation for strategic purposes in response to the urgency in opposing the prejudices widely perpetuated by linguistic education and in cultivating alternatives.

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[10] The research is allowed by ethical committee from Brazil platform using number CAAE 32905420.2.0000.5083.

[11] Original: [A]o envolverem as dimensões críticas e criativas (Li Wei, 2011), os espaços translíngues revelam sua natureza transcolonial, possibilitando a ruptura com pensamentos hegemônicos.

All of us are practicing in different ways positioning ourselves towards what we call "languages" not as separate systems but as different resources in our linguistic repertoires (Pessoa, 2018) that we can access depending on our diverse communicative needs (Santo; Santos, 2018). Bringing this perspective to our linguistic education contexts is often shocking for students, at first, for example, they expect to be "corrected." However, we notice that as we share our understandings of language and linguistic education and our (de) colonial desires, most students express a similar disgust with the inequalities of our society and are eager to explore new paradigms and approaches to doing applied linguistics. As we authors feel our students longing for a break with coloniality, we are encouraged to work with readings of subaltern authors and diversify representations of legitimate Englishers. As the students bring their diverse experiences and texts that they are interested in to the class, we learn with them (Freire, 1994), blurring the lines between our institutional roles. In other words, the "disposition to difference" (Canagarajah, 2013) that we are cultivating starts with the way we see the members of our classes. Our dialogues become a tool to undermine the authoritarianism so common in and outside of linguistic education contexts (Rocha, 2019). We are interested in cultivating spaces for us all to grow and reach new understandings, in our perpetual process of becoming, to be able to better deal with life's ups and downs, in our hyper-connected, superdiverse contemporary society. Our narratives show how we aim for ourselves and our students to practice collectively hybridizing our linguistic repertoires, our experiences, our beliefs, our ideologies, values, etc. through ecological affordances (Rocha, 2019) creating possibilities for the formal educational experience to be, in ways, transformative, healing, even therapeutic. We are especially compelled to do so because, despite the downturn in college enrollments during the COVID-19 pandemic and the previous federal government regime, which severely cut university budgets, in the past 20 years more Brazilians and from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds have gained access to tertiary institutions. Sharing this space with people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds is an opportunity for us all if we are truly open to valuing diverse knowledges and ways of languaging, not correcting those around us and coercing them to conform to our own idealized standards.

We authors believe that language is power. A fundamental question is, how do we use that power? Is it to judge those who deviate from our idealization of a given "language" as inferior? Is it to wield authority over students because we think we teachers know the rules better than they do? Or, even, because they expect us to assume that role? Really, we authors are discussing larger questions of how people treat each other and how language is used in this process. We close this section with yet another pair of powerful quotes from our colleague Cláudia Hilsdorf Rocha (2019) that aptly synthesizes who we are and who we want to be:

> [...] This education or pedagogy can be seen as a form of political existence, demonstrating work that is always experimental and experiential, as it attempts to (re)invent the public sphere, that is, new forms of being, doing, feeling, and living in the world. The idea of the collective, from this perspective, is not equivalent to homogeneity, but emerges from the intentional plurality of the (re)construction of the common good.[12] (Rocha, 2019, p. 17)

And:

> It is important that as we educate in a way that we assume our responsibility in relation to the various forms of violence and suffering that minoritized groups experience in our society and around the world. (Rocha, 2019, p. 18) [13]

These quotes aptly demonstrate fundamental aspects of our emerging translingual praxiologies and the changes we want to live as we (re)position and (re)conceptualize ourselves and language and connect our professional performances to macro issues of inequality in our communities and the world. 6 Further considerations

We acknowledge that we are immersed in coloniality and that the very institutions and intellectual field that we are affiliated with perpetuate this state of being. Still, we are compelled to embark on practicing epistemological disobedience (Mignolo, 2017) and the infinite process of breaking with this, at times heavy-handed, but usually veiled project of white supremacy. We hope that we have sufficiently emphasized that for us, translingual orientations influence how we position ourselves to people, students and otherwise; it is much, much more than just code-switching.

From our narratives we can see that identity, creativity and criticality can be performed by translingual practices as well as to affirm students and teachers' complex discursive practices. Translingual orientations hold the promises of empowering language-minoritized students/teachers by focusing on their voices, local issues, home language practices, and supporting their identity development.

It is important to note that while we are trying to diversify concepts of language, we do not intend to create a new artificial linguistic standard to replace the old ones, nor for translingual orientations to exacerbate or perpetuate social inequalities in any way. Applied Linguists' current and future challenges are many indeed. As we authors continue to cultivate our emerging translingual praxiologies, we would like to understand further what kind of a difference we are making in people's lives. In what contexts do our students continue to cultivate translingual orientations and how? In what contexts are they impeded from doing so and why?

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[12] Original: Essa educação ou pedagogia pode ser vista como uma forma de existência política, evidenciando-se um trabalho sempre experimental e experiencial, uma vez que se ocupa da (re)invenção do espaço público, ou seja, de novas formas de ser, fazer, sentir e viver no mundo. A ideia de coletivo, nessa perspectiva, não equivale à homogeneidade, mas emerge a partir da vivência da pluralidade interessada na (re)construção do bem comum.

[13] [É] importante [...] educarmos para que assumamos nossa responsabilidade social perante as mais diversas formas de sofrimento vividas pelas pessoas no mundo e os mais variados tipos de violência imputados a grupos minoritarizados e subalternizados em nossa(s) sociedade(s).

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