LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION IN BRAZIL
A NEXUS OF NARRATIVES AND DANCING FROM A SOUTHERN DECOLONIAL PERSPECTIVE

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1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims at presenting and discussing ways in which undergraduate students majoring in Portuguese and English languages blend narratives and dancing to reiterate their identities while developing creative and ethical work. The study discussed in this chapter was held at a public university in the Central-Western region in Brazil and it follows the Bakhtinian conception of language and the Freirean approach of adult literacy education.

This work is part of a research project on critical literacy, under my coordination. The main aim is to understand how undergraduate students in public higher education construct meanings concerning pluralized differences, which they seem to find relevant for provoking insights for social agency to transform their conditions, whenever they want to. In order to present this discussion in a clearer way, I have organized this chapter in five sections.

The first section sets the scene to some undergraduate students' work from decolonial and postabyssal thinking. From the second to the fifth sections, there is an analysis and a discussion of students' meaning making while narrating-dancing in complex assemblage (CANAGARAJAH, 2017, 2013). The sixth

section presents the results of the students' work followed by some open conclusions, in which I briefly tackle some of the reflections upon the theory-practice presented here.

2. CONTEXT OF RESEARCH

If, on one hand, universities tend to be sites that reproduce traditional schooling in which ontologies-epistemologies-methodologies[1] reflect the Eurocentric universals, on the other hand, they might promote space for inquiries situated in dynamic localities-globalities as hinted in the introduction of this chapter. I speak from a Brazilian State where Applied Linguistics grapples with competing knowledge construction to expand agency towards diverse societal engagement. Despite being located in the borderline between Bolivia and Paraguay, the state of Mato Grosso do Sul (MS) is "monolingual" in the sense that Portuguese is rarely spoken together with other languages, which brings me to a search for decolonial options in border thinking (MIGNOLO, 2018) to valorize students' diverse forms of knowledge and relationship construction, storytelling, experiences and intercultural ways of living otherwise (WALSH, 2007, 2018). In the field of critical English language teacher education and researching, together with some colleagues[2], I have been trying to move away from totalities through working on translanguaging, tranculturalities, identity, race, ethnicity, power relation, agency and citizenship in critical, creative and ethical (CAPUTO, 1993, TAKAKI, 2011, 2016, 2019a, 2019b) ways.

The focal group of students[3] addressed in this chapter purported to co-construct knowledge around issues that homosexuals face in their everyday life. Moved by the fact that they live under discrimination and epistemic violence (SPIVAK, 1988), they produced a video clip, instead of an end-of-term written assignment. The discipline I was teaching was English VII[4], with fifteen

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[1] My understanding links them as I have stressed in previous work (TAKAKI, 2016, 2019a) and I also resort to Kumaravadivelu´s arguments (2008).

[2] I coordinate a group of undergraduate students and teachers from public schools who are volunteers interested in reading and discussing texts in the field of Applied Linguistics. One of my colleagues has accepted my invitation to include her undergraduate students so that we could work together as only one group. StA (as explained in the next pages is now part of this group).

[3] I thank all the undergraduate students here for authorizing me to share their ontology-epistemology-methodology interconnecting postcolonial, decolonial and post-human possible worlds.

[4] The institutional program of this discipline comprised work on semantics and pragmatics, students' oral and written discursive genres in diverse situations. I complemented such a

students in the seventh term of a language course at the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul, in Brazil. As part of the educational practice, not only in this discipline, but in others as well, students, in groups, are encouraged to engage in discussions revolving around current news, local-global issues, humor, and thorny social questions that make sense to them. This is followed by the production of a multimodal and transgressive work to resist present forms of capitalism, colonialism and patriarchalism (SOUSA SANTOS, 2007, 2014, 2018a), which normally place them as second-class citizens. They are supposed to make meaning by problematizing gender issues and by creating multimodal material (e.g. a video clip) and share it with the whole class to promote further discussion.

For the scope of this chapter, I selected the work of one group. In the cited discipline, three students worked as co-designers of a project on gender. They co-constructed situated meanings and knowledge in horizontal spatial-temporal resources and performativities. They had autonomy to choose a particular theme to co-author work by resorting to multiple resources (CANAGARAJAH, 2013, GARCÍA; WEI, 2014, among others), new creations of subjectivization in critical language awareness (MORGAN, 2005) to go beyond mere local English(es) practice and to valorize emerging meanings through multimodal performativity[5] as complex assemblage (CANAGARAJAH, 2017, 2013).

By not imposing fixed rules and a top-down agenda, I tried to make my students feel comfortable and at the same time challenged by the novelty in their schooling. They were invited to work on issues that were disturbing them inside and outside university, that is, they had to bring in a social relevant theme. Methodology was negotiable and the criterion for evaluation included creativity, critique, multimodality, use of technology, use of English and ethical ways to approach the theme in question. It is believed that, when there is flexibility, students are likely to get engaged more easily in collaborative and rhizomatic (CANAGARAJAH, 2013) ways grounded on the belief that power and knowledge can and should be shared and constantly reconstructed, echoing the postabyssal thinking (SOUSA SANTOS, 2014), explained in session four,

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program with the development of critical literacies (STREET, 1984, MONTE MÓR, 2019, MORGAN, 2005). For the second evaluation, students were asked to work in groups, and produce a seven-minute video clip using the theories of critical literacies and multimodality, studied in previous classes, together with technology and use of English.

[5] In accordance with the instruction, students had to form groups of three or four people and make a project to meet the demands they felt were relevant in their communities.

as well as the decolonial option (MIGNOLO, 2018). In this way, they set out to share their vivid experience related to gender issues as subsequently discussed.

3. PROVOKING THE OTHER: NARRATING-DANCING AS MEANING MAKING 1

> Knowledge and understanding cannot be killed […] Fortunately, non-Western knowledges and praxis of living-knowing was (sic) not killed, neither in the Americas and Africa, nor in China and India and in the vast territories of Islam. Because non-Western knowledge was not killed, today it is not only resurging and reemerging from the darker side of modernity, but if there is a (sic) hope to survive on the planet it would be due to memories and conceptions of life that westernization under the banner of modernity could never conquer and of course never kill.
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> (Mignolo; Walsh, 2018, p. 207)

In order to decolonize Western epistemology, the right to participate in knowledge construction and agency of the racially devalued people, as suggested in the above citation, has to be considered. The undergraduate students' video production[6], "Stories matter", brings more than mere multimodality (KRESS, 2010) once contingent and ampler intersubjective and gender issues are entangled in complex and heterogeneous compositions. Corroborating the idea that agency dislocates people's meanings and social positions, such students chose to initiate the video clip resorting to the power of images, movements, spatiality and voices through digital media. Images of someone's steps (going up woody stairs) are shown followed by the projection of a couple of dancers standing very close to each other in the ballroom of a dance school. The camera focuses on the first dancer's (StB onwards) shoes and it moves up to show the second dancer, (StA from now onwards), to his shoes and, then, to his face. Contrary to what one would usually expect, that is, a boy and a girl, here the couple is formed by two boys. Holding and raising StA in complicit and suggestive ways, StA touches his face on StB´s belly. At the same time, StA´s narrates a discriminatory experience he had gone through during his first day at work, as a teacher of English, in a private institution in the town he lived in. While silence is on, he highlights:

> StA: I was 19 years old when people humiliated me in public. That was my first job as a teacher and I decided to take my students to a karaoke bar, so we could have a nice moment after the end of the semester. I decided to sing a song with one of my students and this song people say is not made for a man to sing, so suddenly people started to yell at me in front of my students. They called me faggot and tried to hurt me with words. I just wanted to sing a song.

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[6]   Available at: https://www.facebook.com/xxxx/videos/vb.100000503050175/22192215114379 29/?type=2&theater StA is represented by xxxx to preserve anonymity.

After the last sentence "I just wanted to sing", one is expected to listen to classical music, as background music, since the environment and the spatial resources suggest ballet dancing. Instead, we have a ballad. The dancers revolve around each other's bodies. Smooth and romantic steps are combined on the wooden floor. Faster and more complex dance moves emerge on the screen. Narrative and dancing are far from being additive elements as they are entangled in complex multimodal ways, resembling the behavior of an assemblage as Canagarajah (2017, p. 668-673) argues: "It can also mean how resources in the communicative ecology (such as objects and artifacts) are marshaled to complement meaning […] and social networks that are distant in time and space."

The starting point of this complex performativity is discrimination against homosexuals (whose origins are located in distant historical time-space that are now brought to the fore here), resonating the denial of differences in spatial and temporal Eurocentric dimension. The concept of *faggot*, as applied to the narrator, went hand in hand with the Western hegemonic identity politics celebrating the white Christian, heterosexual, civilized man as the motor of history and the modus operandus to be pursued (QUIJANO, 2007, 2013; MIGNOLO; WALSH, 2018; SOUSA SANTOS, 2007, 2014, 2018a). In attributing collective and historical meanings to make sure they would hurt the narrator, such people in the karaoke bar revealed the locus of enunciation from which their reactions produced discrimination.

Thus, the colonial matrix of power (QUIJANO, 2007, 2013) seems to have prevailed from the very moment they listened to the song as if dictating the gender, sexuality and conduct through which the piece of music should have been performed. In other words, "meaning is not a true value but a reflection of cognitive (epistemic and hermeneutic) force and import within particular geo-political design", as argued by Mignolo (2013, p. 330). This attribution of meaning, in consonance with the Bakhtinian concept of language, for whom its agent provides and creates meanings in relation to the text/discourse, evinces extreme discomfort and humiliation on the part of the singer, who is placed as a minoritized subject. In this case, an analogy between the teacher (StA) and a given text is apt: singing with his students in the karaoke bar functions as an assemblage (CANAGARAJAH, 2017, 2013), going beyond the text/discourse waiting to have meanings being assigned by those people located in that particular context.

Perhaps it does not matter what piece of music StA wanted to sing, but what was really at stake was the fact that people who yelled at him did not ask

themselves why they thought and acted the way they did. Neither did they interrogate the consequences of such a way of relating to him, who shares the same social context as they do. Questioning the historical origins of their positionings and attitude when they say "that song is not made for a man to sing" seems quite out of the question. Calling StA a "faggot" is far from being interrogated whether hiding the entanglement of his face, voice, body and performative construction was possible. The principle underlying this provocation has its foundation in colonial and patriarchal forms of relationship, which produced ways of life that tend to erase the agent's locus of enunciation in this particular moment in the video clip.

The interpretation of the audience's attributions of meanings to StA's performativity corroborates Mignolo's (2018a) historical explanations regarding the mechanisms of power that regulated epistemology, which, in turn, produced an ontology that promoted the conditions for thoughts and praxis for human theorizing. For such people, human and humanity are, therefore, concepts created under logophobia (FOUCAULT, 1996), fear of the different discursive logics and plural ways of doing, being and living (WALSH, 2018). Self-reflexivity and self-critique are seldom under the spotlight for such an audience and their scathing criticism devastating otherness strengthens the collective and colonial matrix of power (QUIJANO, 2007, 2013).

One crucial point in this video clip is the idea of contact zones elaborated by Sousa Santos (2014) drawing on Pratt (1992):

> The contact zones are therefore zones in which rival normative ideas, knowledges, power forms, symbolic universes, and agencies meet in usually unequal conditions and resist, reject, assimilate, imitate, translate, and subvert each other, thus giving rise to hybrid cultural constellations in which the inequities of exchanges *may be either reinforced or reduced* (SOUSA SANTOS, 2014, p. 342). (emphasis added)

This moment in the video clip refers to the encounter of a black-skinned dancer (StB) and a yellow-skinned one (StA). Here, the teacher (StA) acts as an agent who "endeavors to provoke, encourage, construct, generate, and advance with others, critical questionings, understandings, knowledges, and actionings; other ways of thinking and of doing with*"*, as Mignolo stresses (2018, p. 83). The rhythm of their steps seems to accelerate as if they were recuperating StA's vivid and discriminatory trajectory stimulating the viewers to put themselves in his shoes.

4. TENSION AND POSSIBILITY IN GIRLS' VOICES: NARRATING-DANCING 2

The volume is turned down and a girl's voice reaches the viewers' ears[7]. This time, resistance comes from her mother, originated in the epistemologies of the North, delineating the abyssal thinking[8] (SOUSA SANTOS, 2007, 2014) and making sure straight men and women are the patterns to be followed. This logic sees identity (and body) as a one-size-fits-all monocultural paradigm. The girl's 'story[9] (StC) has an apparent happy end, though:

> StC: My mother discovered that I was a lesbian when she took my cell phone and saw an exchange of my messages with my girlfriend when I was 14. She told me that if my father were alive he would be very ashamed of me. It was very difficult, I break the relationship and at 16 years old I left home for a month. When I got back, she did not touch the subject but over time I showed that I was just like any other girl and introduced my current girlfriend. They talked, cried and became friends. Nowadays she accepts me the way I am.

This crisis draws attention to the verticalized inequities within gender issues, knowledges, languages and cultures. Again, the coloniality of power (QUIJANO, 2007, 2013) engendered StC's coloniality of being (WALSH, 2007, 2018) in the sense that she was seen as the black sheep of her family to the point she had to leave home. Moreover, relations of power in her family, mainly between man and woman, husband and wife, are highlighted. Even though StC's father is dead, her mother appeals to his position as if recreating his heteropatriarchal style. This, in turn, complexifies the fact that identity questions and gender issues are reproduced within the relationship between a mother and a daughter, a wife and a husband, a family and the broader society.

One can perceive some trauma being transformed due to the renewal in the mother-daughter relationship that challenged the historical ideological superiority of heterosexuality. A kind of reconciliation was produced as time went by, and also probably due to the insurgent understanding of her mother, which I interpret as being closely related to her (their?) ontological forces. Engaging ontologically and not only epistemologically in relationships, apparently, accentuates the postabyssal thought (SOUSA SANTOS, 2007) that conceives such forces as inseparable.

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[7] In this video clip, no images of girls appear, only their voices.

[8] The abyssal thinking has divided the world into two paradigms: Westernized and non-Westernized forms of knowledge construction, agency and ways of being, with emphasis on the former.

[9] We have opted for maintaining the student´s original story/text. Thus, no correction in terms of use of English was made. This procedure applies to all the excerpts here.

I interpret postabyssal thought as an ecological form of social justice, which recognizes explicit knowledge and emerging heterogeneity but, not necessarily legitimizing the different, simultaneous and incomplete epistemologies (non-scientific knowledge, for example). It implies a more collective destabilization of the hegemonic forces by asking questions (How can one transform abyssal thinking with new concepts that will not reproduce it?) with partial, self-critical (TAKAKI, 2011, 2019a), reflexive answers imbued with colearning.

While such a call for social justice (SOUSA SANTOS, 2018a) is crucial, "decolonialization is neither new nor uncontested" (PENNYCOOK; MAKONI, 2020, p. 117). StC, her girlfriend, her mother, and her dead father, each of them with their own personhood intertwined with language, performativity in assemblage fashion (CANAGARAJAH, 2017, 2013) are in need of their own decolonization. In other words, intercultural translation (SOUSA SANTOS, 2018b; MIGNOLO; WALSH, 2018; WALSH, 2007) would be useful for them to problematize the internal asymmetries and paradoxes in their own discourses, knowledges and cultures, whether or not occupying minoritized places. Arguing for the impossibility of cultural completeness, translation is made possible due to the productive differences in the encounter of cultures. An effort of self-reflexivity to recognize that their incompleteness always exists as the very possibility of transformations via contact zones (SOUSA SANTOS, 2014, PRATT, 1992) might be pertinent for both the North and the South Globes.

Thus, questions of gender revolve around other situated conditions of inequality embracing class, race, religion, to mention a few, demanding not only critique (MONTE MÓR, 2019) but also self-critique or self-critical reflexivity (TAKAKI, 2011, 2016, 2019a), as already emphasized.

In this work, another similar prejudice is narrated by a second girl (StD) who takes over from the first one smoothly. One can hardly ever perceive the transition between one voice to the other.

> StD: One situation that I sadly remember happened when was going to work in a nightclub when I passed through two girls holding hands. There was a car with the headlight off chasing them; there was a guy inside of it. When I noticed that, I turned around the block to get closer them. I gave them a ride and they came crying inside the car. He followed us through nine blocks. They told me that man attacked them and tried to put them in the car. They were already running away from him for nine blocks.

These are claims on plurality – something the colonial matrix of power could not develop and encourage. Here the bodies and voices, traversed by histories of

discrimination and violence, are not detached from language. Epistemic consequences lay on the difficulty to reimagine how different the approaches and attitude towards homosexuality could be. As already reiterated here, the aforementioned decolonial scholars argue that, for the European Jesuits, indigenous languages and culture were unfit to convey biblical messages and, therefore, to catechize the native people. They created such norms to maintain things the way they are until today: white, heterosexual, Christian men and women assuming powerful positions in society, making sure the others assimilate their language and culture, leaving little or no space for diversity with strict penalties for those who do not comply with such a norm.

This colonial spirit constitutes a major presence in StD's complaint in this video clip. In the description of her story, it is clear that the girls chose to hold their hands at night as if it would expose them less than in the daylight. Unfortunately, this was not the case as the man chased and attacked them. What kind of sociocultural, ontological-epistemological-methodological realms do his principles, values and decision harbor? What historical explanations are there to make him think he was "more powerful" than the two girls? Under what principle is his "right" informed to act that way? How was his concept of woman historically constructed? The responses imply that he understood the girls as a discursive text to which he opposed: a girl cannot hold hands with another girl as it would be an anomaly from his perspective. This notion is tightly interwoven with identity and community reflecting Westernized ways of being in the world. In this way, assuming difference (being lesbians) contributes to be "historically stigmatized by heterosexual intolerance" (WALSH, 2018, p. 47).

5. RESISTING: NARRATING-DANCING 3

Referring back to the video clip, while the two dancers (StB, StA) execute the continuous sequences in beautiful, rehearsed and flowing moves, the subsequent scene brings to light another episode. This time, one that occurred at the public university attended by such students.

> StA: The year was 2014. The LGBT movement was organized and had several powerful slogans. We decided to bring them to the academic environment and pasted some of the slogans on the door of our (?) academic center (?) and around the runners *(sic)*. The next day, the answers. Swastika, terrible words and a death threat. We were saying "homophobia kills" and someone wrote back saying "yes, and my gun will also kill you." I was that you. We could all be that "you". In fact, I was terrified of coming to the university for a while… But we surely did something, we reacted! We made a huge reunion of LGBT students and scheduled a debate to spread that

> case around the UFMS[10]. The room where we would have the debate was flared up one day before we have it there. We could never give this university a response to that fire and it still burns a little bit inside of me.

This is a powerful narrative evincing a form of agency coming from minoritized perspectives as showcased in this fragment: "The LGBT movement was organized and had several powerful slogans. We decided to bring them to the academic environment and pasted some of the slogans on the door of our (?) academic center (?) and around the runners" (probably aisles). Students got organized around a shared interest: trying to disarticulate the framework in which the hegemonic process operates. One may perceive that their initiative to make the protest inside the university premises suggests the academia, as an institution, has not taken into due account the fight against LGBT discrimination. On that occasion, the president of the university did not give a response neither to the protest nor to the wanton incident (the fire). Given the StA's resentment, more resistance, in the air, is likely to persist as the end of the story is not finished: "We could never give this university a response to that fire and it still burns a little bit inside of me."

Also, it does not demand too much effort to realize resistance may not suffice when dialogues are blocked as StA hints. To make matters worse, in response to the LGBT movement, violence took place inside the university, a political spatiality that embraces diverse ontological-epistemological-methodological (TAKAKI, 2016, 2019a) sides. This brings us to a next step: How can an embedded "we-they" (FREIRE, 2005) orientation envisage a decolonial option (MIGNOLO, 2013) so as to strengthen postabyssal thought (SOUSA SANTOS, 2007) and, by extension, ways of doing and being with otherness in the cases illustrated in this video clip?

Interrogating the sociohistorical and cultural structures of knowledge and of knowing that have led the aggressors to react in this way might be a good start. In order to try to negotiate and renegotiate meanings across both sides of the story, understanding their contextual origins in terms of locality is fundamental. Locality means to conceive of the violent subjects as constituted vis-à-vis the others from different cosmologies and loci of enunciation. Putting it differently, this premise entails recognizing and bringing in the situated participants' intersubjectivities in the production of the video clip.

I interpret that the students' primary aim was to make a claim for respect and for the right to be different. This is only one side of the issue, though. The

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10   The Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul.

other is the continuous struggle to approximate the radical other for unresolved dialogues and collaborative agency to try to transform the principles and values that formed Westernized knowledge and power towards creative ways of coexisting and acting through difference.

The previous cited decolonial scholars have been theorizing to sensitize the global North to recognize the Southern theories located in complex colonial and post-colonial contexts. This is not to say that one ontology-epistemology-methodology, within internal tensions as Takaki (2016, 2019a) points out, should substitute the other, considering the dynamics in each of them. However hard this might be, the global North depends on the global South (and vice-versa) for "their-our" survival since the planet they-we both share is under serious threat. To populate the global North's ideas with language and knowledge from the South does not mean consensus, but rather a conflictual consensus (MOUFFE, 2013, p. 55) or a productive "dissensus" (RANCIÉRE, 2010, p. 37) to question subjectivation and aesthetic-political experience as "the essence of politics is the manifestation of dissensus as the presence of two worlds in one. The essence of politics is dissensus. Dissensus is not a confrontation between interests or opinions. It is the demonstration (manifestation) of a gap in the sensible itself" (RANCIÈRE, 2010, p. 38).

Differences are used as a political resource to open up space for permanent and unequal renegotiations, and changing the terms of the conversation (MIGNOLO, 2018) presupposes the global South's transforming the stereotypical/equivocal images coming from the radical global North. For Sousa Santos (2018, p. 67) maybe "it is time the Latin-American leftists learn the innovations that are emerging among the leftists in Southern Europe with the richness of diversity of democratic experiences", which he denominates "demodiversity" (SOUSA SANTOS, 2018b, p. 67). This implies going beyond the idea of a fixed and pre-established construction, such as the enemy, and moving towards the notion of "adversary[11]" (MOUFFE, 2013, p. 18), and creatively elaborating other articulations as links instead of mere dichotomies while problematizing them. Mignolo says that Quijano

> turned decolonization into decoloniality. The goal of decoloniality was no longer to send the settlers hoe so that the natives might build their own nation-state, but rather to undertake epistemic reconstitution, that is, precisely to change the terms (assumptions

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[11]   Instead of enemy, adversary is preferred by such a theorist to highlight the idea of possible renegotiations of meanings from someone who is part of the game and, thus, cannot be discarded.

and rules) of the conversation rather than just the content, which were the splendors and miseries of decolonization (MIGNOLO, 2018b, p. 381).

In the video clip, it is clear that an epistemic reconstitution is a far cry bearing in mind the silencing of the minoritized voices at the end. Despite the initiative of the movement, what cannot be denied is the students' focuses on the need for further actions, which will demand other strategies by resorting to creativity to cater for the "the praxis that lead to decolonizing knowledge and being" as Mignolo (MIGNOLO; WALSH, 2018, p. 136) claims in the epigraphy in the beginning of this section.

The multimodal meanings (KRESS, 2010) come from inside out and not from an accurate description of the dance scenes per se. Much more complex than non-verbal language, dance goes beyond the quotidian language the viewers try to interpret from inside the dancers' heads. Viewers are invited to feel their bodies performing physical movements, such as: twisting, contorting, bending, spinning around, which are populated with meanings that words do not capture. They indicate an assemblage (CANAGARAJAH, 2017) rather than mere multimodality. This is an example of how to try to nurture sensations and energy in political and artistic (MOUFFE, 2013, p. 97) multimode. In this collaborative artistic sort of activism, the choreography carefully translates meanings that are always already partially understood. This chapter tries to convey such meanings through "writing dance" letting "dancing write" too. If writing is closer to dominant language form and if dancing is not, I go along with Pennycook and Makoni (2020, p. 125): "We take the position that a Global South applied linguistics perspective should involve neither a total delinking from Western epistemologies nor a scholarship in which there is only interaction in the Global South".

6. THE OTHER'S VOICE MATTERS: NARRATING-DANCING 4

Within this spirit, that is, engaging with difference, another narrative emerges through the voice of a girl lamenting the homophobic treatment a boy is subjected to in his own family. Being heard, accepted the way he is and having his family meet his boyfriend is something idealized, given the inexistence of respect, care and love at home. The following is a sophisticated evaluation of how difference starts from/at home:

StC: My homophobic situation was not in the streets or at school. It was at my own house, my own family. This hurts a lot more since they are the ones who should love me the most and above all. It hurts because it' silent. It hurts because it's daily. It is in little actions, unnoticeable to everyone else. But not to me. Not at all. It's when they

tell me to act more "serious". It's when I have a boyfriend, and no one wants to meet him. No one asks about him. It's when I know, deeply, I could never share as much as I wanted to. And I want a lot.

Where does StC's family's discrimination come from a historical stand-point? It is pertinent to link it to the first line of the abyssal thinking (SOUSA SANTOS, 2007, 2014), which sought to preserve the pre-established vertical linear social, cultural and educational systems, reproducing normativity and standardized figures of men and women, "serious" conduct and non-serious conduct. The repetition of the word(s) *I, hurts, not, when, wants/wanted, no one in dialogue with family, everyone else* brings scales that are semiotic and "constructed by institutions and people to understand or explain social interactions […] in spatial orientation in unpredictable ways" (CANAGARAJAH, 2017, p. 642). They emerge combined with body alignment, affective dimensions going beyond cognition, change of rhythm and musical beats, sensitive dancing steps, on the hard wooden, shiny welcoming floor to address the accommodation of such diverse objects shaping meanings that conventional language and multimodality (KRESS, 2010) per se cannot grasp.

Hence, it seems undeniable that the colonial matrix of power (QUIJANO, 2007, 2013) has a pedagogical and didactic policy in the sense that it educate/educated people to follow world views that are taken for granted through manichaeistic evaluations around subject, identity, culture and civil society as already reiterated in the beginning of this text. As can be seen, StC's family is the product of the modern/colonial education drawing upon predictable and top-down knowledge and ways of relating to differences making StC's ways of being invisible. Furthermore, it is interesting to observe how power is exerted in micro levels (FOUCAULT, 1979) subtly in StC's everyday life as showcased in "it's daily; it is in little actions, unnoticeable to everyone else; but not to me." In the face of this situation, his capacity to ressignify meanings as a language user/creator's, in Bakhtinian sense, is epistemically meaningful. Thinking, doing and being with decolonial language means encountering with "specific social, cultural, political and economic forces" (PENNYCOOK; MAKONI, 2020, p. 133) permeated with risks.

In "no one wants to meet him. No one asks about him", it is clear that the marginalization of both StC and his boyfriend prevails due to the imposed assimilation ethos into the dominant culture with reference to StC's family. A transmodern (DUSSEL, 2012) relationship, starting with the family - in which the contamination of the different ways of "coliving" occurs - is scarcely

envisaged by StC. Respect might not suffice. Some contamination / a nexus of multiple sides can be produced by the rearticulation of emerging intercultural relations of power in ways that reduce social injustice for StC and his boyfriend. Thus, "Reaffirmation of one′s own 'hermeneutical possibilities' […] living in the bi-culturally borders […] to 'create critical thought'" (DUSSEL, 2012, p. 22) is fundamental. Multiple decolonial perspectives constitute the cornerstone of transmodernity (DUSSEL, 2012) to problematize their own constraints and possibilities. However, they may inadvertently marginalize knowledge and agency from the periphery and perpetuate the norms with ontology-episte-mology-methodology (TAKAKI, 2016, 2019a), harbored in Eurocentric logo-centric, fallogocentric thought, discourse and agency of the global North over the South. In this sense, enabling more relational, situated and sustainable institutional worlds is desirable.

To make StC's family unlearn the colonial privilege requires unsmooth dialogues with the subaltern StC and his boyfriend. Such difficult dialogues are embedded within body, experience, culture, knowledge and geohistorical location (the geopolitics of knowledge), which are always in flux, relational and subject to contestations by means of intercultural translations (WALSH, 2007, MIGNOLO; WALSH, 2018, SOUSA SANTOS; MENDES, 2018). That is the permanent StC's struggle in the quest for dislocating the authority of the colonial matrix of power (QUIJANO, 2007, 2013). Challenging what has been taken for granted in the colonial scenario of gender vi-à-vis other individual and collective trajectories is of paramount importance. In this way, he might need to make alliances with other partners and elaborate on strategies to enter difficult dialogue with his adversaries (MOUFFE, 2013). This is not to say that shared norms will be received homogeneously, neither is it to render given, con-sensual and fixed reality (PENNYCOOK; MAKONI, 2020). On the contrary, the construction of decolonial space is context-driven and StC's reflection upon the apparent invisible oppression reverberate contingencies, uncertainties and risks to transform such a scenario of power and meaning making going hand-in-hand but differently.

At the same time, in order for StC and the other student here to leave their comfort zone, a kind of will is implied:

> The will to understand invites someone to see what one sees very well from the per-spective of someone who does not see it very well; it also invites one to understand what one considers as relevant from the perspective of someone who does not consider it equally relevant (SOUSA SANTOS, 2018a, p. 55).

This exercise is part and parcel of broader social contexts intertwined with family, community, university, in short, with other spacial-temporal environment in which ignorance and knowledge also coexist in interconnected ways. StC's attempt to unlearn ignorance entails learning other unknown meanings, as Sousa Santos (2018a, p. 55) emphasizes: "in the flux of the different kinds of knowledge in which human beings are involved and engaged, ignorance can be seen both as a point of departure and as a point of arrival."

The previous excerpts reflected the students' narratives while the viewers were presented with an assemblage (CANAGARAJAH, 2013, 2017) combining dancing and oral narratives, yellow and black people, men and women's voices which have been historically silenced by the global North (CASTRO-GOMES, 2007, DUSSEL, 2012, GROSFOGUEL, 2013, 2007, MALDONADO-TORRES, 2013, MENESES DE SOUSA, 2019; MIGNOLO, 2008, 2018a, 2018b; QUIJA-NO, 2007, 2013; WALSH, 2007, 2018). This complex ontological-epistemologi-cal-methodological (TAKAKI, 2016, 2019a) authorship through local English(es) encourages viewers to think and act otherwise through decolonial eyes, bodies, colors, voices, music, dance while occupying the ballroom, as a space in political mode, to recognize differences. The idea is not to be pushed into Europeanisa-tion pre-establishing social classification of colonizers and colonized as Quijano (2013, p. 25) warns us. This procedure might strengthen discrimination against homosexuals, in this case, gays and lesbians, and also against black people, albeit this point is not addressed in this students' production.

Another "turn of the screw" that helps illuminate the problematization of the analysis of the students' work is the change promoted through the choice of three modes of meaning conflating music, dancing and orality without passing on to the viewers the idea of a superior form over the other. Instead of repeating the traditional pattern of interaction (ballet and classical music), what the viewers have is a subversive and complex composition, which I interpret as being a creative, critical and ethical work seeking to interrupt/minimize the effects of the coloniality of power (MIGNOLO; WALSH, 2018). Re-embodiment and relocation of thought, doing and being within differences can shed light on new intercultural intersubjectivities, as Walsh reminds us (WALSH, 2007, MIGNOLO; WALSH, 2018).

It is not an accident that "it takes two to tangle" as the popular saying high-lights. However, this claim stands in need of further qualification. Given the complexity in contemporary societies, it takes multiple people and things to tangle and to get entangled and contaminated, as underlined in the title of this

text. The two lines in the abyssal thinking (SOUSA SANTOS, 2007) could be related to the centrifugal and centripetal forces (BAKHTIN, 1999) concerning the way language functions. If in the former, intersubjectivity is erased, in the latter, it is liberated. Both lines are riddled with a "double movement to dislocate colonialities", according to Mignolo's interpretation (2013, p. 229). Sousa Santos (2007) proceeds the discussion making it possible to account for ongoing renegotiations of power and knowledge in which a compromise between the two, now, multiple lines might render a postabyssal thought.

With the informed choice of such an intersectionality of the symbolic elements in the video clip (bodies, race, ethnics, social class, gender, women's voices, steps, music, dance, rhythm, tones of voices to say the least), the undergraduate students challenge patriarchal systems. Neither is white privileged over black, nor is man privileged over woman, nor is heterosexual privileged over homosexual and lesbian, nor is Christian privileged over non-Christian, nor is knowledge production privileged over folklore. Contrary to the Eurocentric vision, here, notions of identity, multimodal performativity and meaning making are attempts to go beyond the simple addition of elements (race, gender, sexuality, spirituality, spatiality, ontology, epistemology, methodology, translanguaging and multimodality).

The undergraduate students did not accomplish the task to obtain a minimum mark to be approved in this discipline but, instead, they sought to deconstruct the coloniality of power (MIGNOLO; WALSH, 2018) resorting to their vivid experience from the periphery (as minoritized in power). At the same time, they occupied the center, as recreators of the decolonial option (MIGNOLO, 2008, 2018a). This signals a shift towards the building of political and educational spaces for their positioning and ways of being otherwise linking university and the social bond.

7. RESULTS

The stories presented in the video clip tried to illustrate the entanglement of complex and vigorous resources in the participants' lives. Grosfoguel (2013) has expressed his "dissatisfaction with the epistemic consequences of the knowledge produced by the Latin American Subalterns Studies Group". He understands "they underestimated in their work ethnic/racial perspectives coming from the region, while giving privilege to Western thinkers such as Foucault, Derrida, Gramsci and Guha" (GROSFOGUEL, 2013, p. 63), reproducing, therefore, "studies about the subaltern rather than studies with and from a subaltern perspective"

(GROSFOGUEL, 2013, p. 65). Claiming for a non-essentialist anti-European critique, Grosfoguel (2013) argues in favor of a "broader canon of thought" (GROSFOGUEL, 2013, p. 66) – not only the Western one in critical dialogue towards pluriversal epistemic/ethical/political projects – assuming epistemologies from inside "critical thinkers from the Global South thinking from and with subalternized racial/ethnic/sexual races and bodies" (GROSFOGUEL, 2013, p. 66). In this regard, he goes along with Quijano (2013) for whom race and racism constitute the main tenets under which the diverse hierarchies of the world-system are organized. Extending this positioning, decolonizing theory-practice inside and outside the university classroom and in teacher language education requires a geopolitical of knowing and being that recognizes the epistemic reconstitution as its foundations.

As Mignolo (2018a) warns us against:

> the danger of thinking, imagining and seeing decoloniality only from outside of the matrix of modern/colonial power. Such thought and visioning not only limits the spheres of action, but they also blind eyesight of the decolonial cracks that exist within this matrix and system and that, in essence, complement and push towards the edges and borders. For many of us these cracks are the place of our location, agency and everyday struggle. (MIGNOLO, 2018a, p. 82)

The risk of essentializing LGBT movements can be minimized if a continuous effort towards the coexistence of perspectives in unresolved dialogue prevails. The demarcations among differences are now blurred and history has shown us the need for creative and strategic moves as the cultivation of ontologies-epistemologies-methodologies (TAKAKI, 2016, 2019a) in productive ways of knowing and being within such differences. However, seeing the conflict as if it does not affect the collective life means to naturalize and reproduce the social hierarchy in another colonial matrix of power, in which old and new generations will most likely to be insulted and oppressed. In this video clip, the students grapple with difficult situations, but there is always room for educational expansion.

As already mentioned, Sousa Santos and Mendes (2018) claim for a post-abyssal democracy, that is, a more representative and participatory model. To this end, the authors emphasizes that "Europe has to unlearn its assumptions that informed its democratic forms and learn with the global South facing it as a partner not an object of domination (SOUSA SANTOS; MENDES, 2018, p. 70). They propose a "mutual and an intercultural encounter with the epistemologies of the South to avoid repeating the paradigms of the past" (SOUSA SANTOS; MENDES, 2018, p. 70).

Concerning strategy, Menezes de Souza (2019, p. 14) postulates that

> It is thus not the case of merely inverting the positions of the North and South, nor is it the case that the South has something to teach the North. It is the hegemonic paradigm of coloniality that is instrumentalized in the North, through its established concepts of modernity, science and universality that needs to be challenged.

This positioning would go against the recreation of a new hierarchy with new actors converging to "logocentrism" (DERRIDA, 1997, p. 49). In logocentric perspectives, the coloniality of power would not change the universality of the meaning (centered on reason) limiting itself to a reductionist change of actors in a new vertical axis. Furthermore, Sousa Santos (2018) is careful not to erase the tensions inherent to any process of listening to otherness and of renegotiations of meanings.

Studies by Latin American scholars working on the decoloniality and the epistemologies from the South (SOUSA SANTOS, 2014, 2018a, SOUSA SANTOS; MENESES, 2010, SOUSA SANTOS; MENDES, 2018b) should be understood considering such theorists' loci of enunciation (BHABHA, 1994) as well as the readers sociocultural and historical contexts. They encompass rhizomatic and "under erasure" (DERRIDA, 1998) knowledge construction and agency. If the LGBT groups remain isolated, they might run the risk of speaking for themselves disregarding their own paradoxes from inside. Consequently, little room for ontological-epistemological-methodological (TAKAKI, 2016, 2019a) contaminations might emerge to renegotiate meanings on a collaborative basis.

The video clip mixes language and dancing, races, gender, voices and stories that matter and there is evidence that more epistemic engagement is desirable on the part of their producers. To speak of "decolonial option and to change the terms of the conversation" (MIGNOLO, 2011), and it is to bring self-critique (TAKAKI, 2011, 2019a) to the fore. By self-critique I mean to question and grapple with my understandings of my own critique in relation to the different collective and historical other/difference. This is due to the fact that there are social consequences on how and with whom we, together, can rethink and reconstruct epistemologies-ontologies-methodologies in ways to reduce the impact of the oppressions and maximize our linguistic, cultural, social, political and economic participation through posthumam thought (PENNYCOOK in this volume) in local-global interconnected human non-human worlds (TAKAKI, 2019b). Self(critical) literacies and citizenship echo "self-reflexivity (the continuous feedback of expert knowledge back into

society, transforming it)" as Escobar (2013, p. 36) has defined it. This position implies an approximation and a contamination between the radical Southern theories and the radical global North. Instead of simply resisting the Eurocentric visions of the world, more agonistic (MOUFFE, 2013) and unsmooth dialogues involving multiple and conflictual epistemologies-ontologies-methodologies are needed in creative ways towards participatory demodiversity (SOUSA SANTOS; MENDES, 2018).

The students' video production suggests that a one-sided perspective predominates. In other words, what we see are actors performing and constructing meanings related to difference from within the same community of homosexuals and lesbians united for a cause. It should be noted, however, that, in order to unlearn inculcated prejudice, relearn from epistemic action, they would need to have allowed themselves to contaminate and be contaminated by difference in agonistic (MOUFFE, 2013) and unresolved dialogical fashion. In this way, maybe transgender representatives and heterosexuals would/should have been invited to participate in this artistic and political work.

If Southern decolonial perspectives presuppose acting in flux, for future work, a consistent effort in this direction would call for the participation of both an Amerindian woman and a black woman in the video clip or a black Amerindian woman. It would also intensify their horizon of conceptual possibilities. I interpret this is a possible form of contamination/nexus among students and critical scholars "from and with subalternized racial/ethnic/sexual races and bodies" that Grosfoguel (2013, p. 66) calls for.

8. IN (NON)CONCLUDING

> Multiple ontologies are only possible if multiple epistemologies are possible.
> (MIGNOLO; WALSH, 2018, p. 227)

Revaluing global-local educational initiatives might be one of the most important contributions we can make at present. Exploring conditions for creative forms of evaluation/assessment not only at higher education, but also at other levels, is possible in language teaching education. The students, in this study, brought the tip of the iceberg concerning difference. As agency is a dynamic concept that circulates in different but interconnected scales, such students have realized that critique (MONTE MÓR, 2019), creativity and technology can be powerful tools to resignify meanings and occupy a different contact zone (SOUSA SANTOS, 2014; PRATT, 1992) in order to legitimize

their discourses and enact social practices coming from their own group (LGBT in this case).

Understanding ordinary people's culture as valuable as teacher's culture and perceiving social inequities constituted such students' intersubjectivities and strategies to relink university with their everyday lives. Interpreting discourses and the world around "us-them" has been a useful lesson (FREIRE, 2005). Also, post-colonial (BHABHA, 1994, MENEZES DE SOUZA, 2019) and decolonial perspectives (CASTRO-GOMES, 2007; DUSSEL, 2012; ESCOBAR, 2013, GROSFOGUEL, 2013, 2007, MALDONADO-TORRES, MENEZES DE SOUZA, 2019; MIGNOLO, 2018; QUIJANO, 2013, 2007; WALSH, 2007, 2018, among others) might see emerging room for the postabyssal thought from the global South (SOUSA SANTOS, 2007) as key agency towards productive contamination within difference.

Boundaries are crisscrossed by visible and invisible elements, bodies, multimodal meanings, and by the interventions that the new media usually afford. This text aimed at discussing some issues in this direction through students' innovative assemblage (CANAGARAJAH, 2013, 2017). Conflicting and partial engagements with the world do not need to be enemies as they can be adversaries (MOUFFE, 2013) to complementary tools. Subaltern agency conceived from the borders of the colonial/modern education world has the potential to embark on productive critical (STREET, 1984; MONTE MÓR, 2019; MORGAN, 2005), (self)critical (TAKAKI, 2011, 2016, 2019a, 2019b) (de)linking (PENNYCOOK; MAKONI, 2020).

Self(critical) and unresolved dialogical base in heterogeneous fluid ways might be possible through decolonial option, which is neither an alternative nor a solution as Mignolo claims (MIGNOLO, 2008, 2018a). Going beyond confrontation to try to transform the polarized world views and the abyssal lines (SOUSA SANTOS, 2007; SOUSA SANTOS; MENDES, 2018) of the darker side of modernity (MIGNOLO, 2011), which have prevailed for more than five centuries, appears to be the modus operandi in contemporary education and societal relations.

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