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## DECOLONIZING LANGUAGE AND ETHNIC-RACIAL RELATIONSHIPS IN BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE TEACHING

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### ABSTRACT

Based on the discussion on the monolingualism of the other undertaken by Derrida and the notions of decolonization, coloniality, decoloniality, zone of non-being and the abyssal line found in Fanon, Quijano, Mignolo and Sousa Santos, this work brings in its textual body the concept of device linguistic-racial, present here as a means to reflect on the relationship between the teaching of Brazilian Portuguese and ethnic-racial relations, and as a means to think about the decolonization of the language in a country like Brazil, whose European colonialism was able to ruin black and indigenous bodies by imposing on them, using indefensible violence, “an existential deviation” (Fanon, 2008, p.30). For this reason, the idea of universal ethics and the notion of love evoked by Freire, patron of Brazilian education, are revisited, bearing in mind that there cannot be social justice if there is no epistemological justice, as Boaventura de Sousa Santos thinks.

**Keywords:** Coloniality. Decolonization. Language. Teaching. Ethnic-racial relations.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Decolonizing language and ethnic-racial relations in the teaching of Brazilian Portuguese constitutes the main reflection of this work, which means that its attention is focused on the phenomenon of the decolonization of being through language "towards a new humanism" (Fanon, 2008, p. 25). In other words, it is an approach that falls under the prism of decolonial studies, and this act requires that, at this precise moment in history, the real reasons for carrying out this decolonization be presented (cf. Araújo, 2025a, 2025b; Fanon, 2022).

But, first of all, it is necessary to explain in what terms and senses the discussion will deal with the words decolonize and decolonization, which emerged from historical demands updated in contemporary times, especially by the decolonial wave, indebted to ancestors such as: Juliano Moreira, Aimé Césaire, Fanon, Léopold Senghor, Kwame Nkrumah, Fu-Kiau, Abdias do Nascimento, Amílcar Cabral, Paulo Freire, Nina Simone, Clovis Moura, Agostinho Neto, Angela Davis, Nelson Mandela, Lélia Gonzales, Edison Carneiro, bell hooks, Jacques Derrida, Nêgo Bispo, Petronilha Beatriz Gonçalves e Silva, among others.

The mere mention of these proper names can give a clue to the terms and meanings mobilized in the present discursive crossroads. However, the first thing to admit is that decolonize and decolonization are ways of referring to an action contrary to colonization, whose form expresses the act of colonizing, as indicated by the Latin prefix of negation [des-]. Then, it should be noted that it can be an action that occurs with the abandonment of the colony by the colonists or even as an event that takes place with the departure of the colonizing forces. In the latter case, “its unusual importance stems from the fact that it [decolonization]

constitutes, from the first day, the minimum demand of the colonized.” (Fanon, 2022, p. 31, added note).

Thus, in geopolitical terms, its meanings can indicate the action of ending a colonization or "leaving behind" a territory or country subjected to the colonial regime, whether through an agreement between the parties involved, colonizer and colonized, or through the force of armed struggle that results in liberation from colonial power. It also concerns the historical process that begins with the liberation of the colony. Therefore, it is a process that "affects being, fundamentally modifies being, transforms spectators crushed by inessentiality into privileged actors, gathered in an almost grandiose way by the luminous rays of History" (Fanon, 2022, p. 32, my translation).

However, in any case, decolonization is always a phenomenon that involves violence, above all, the violence of leaving the state of colonial violence and the liberating violence that responds to oppressive colonial violence, which implies that decolonizing requires struggle, combat, since decolonization “does not receive its legitimacy from any supernatural power: the colonized ‘thing’ becomes human in the very process through which it liberates itself.” (Fanon, 2022, pp. 32-33, my translation).

Regarding such violence and atrocities perpetrated by European colonialism, Aimé Césaire said, in *Discourse on Colonialism*, that “[...] it would be necessary, first, to study how colonization functions to decivilize the colonizer; to brutalize him in the proper sense of the word, to degrade him, to awaken him to buried instincts, greed, violence, racial hatred, moral relativism [...]” (Césaire, 2020, p. 17, emphasis and addendum added).

The decolonization process cannot, therefore, happen like magic, as it takes time, causing pain, the marks of which, left by the violence of colonialism, are still healing, especially the state of mind that holds ancestral memories in the decolonizing body; that is, emerging from trauma, from colonial trauma, is not an easy task because of the colonial scheme that remained in the form of coloniality, as Anibal Quijano rightly identified (cf. Quijano, 2009).

Well, dealing with the debris and rubble left behind corresponds, therefore, to another phase of the decolonization process that also involves the challenge of dealing with issues related to the coloniality of power (inherited economic and political schemes); the coloniality of knowledge (the superimposition of Eurocentric epistemology on local cosmologies, reorganizing linguistic planning); and, finally, issues related to ontological coloniality (colonial processes of subjectivity and identification, aesthetics, sexuality, psyche, necropolitics) (cf. Mignolo, 2020).

Here, we will deal more directly with issues related to the ways in which the coloniality of knowledge continues to use language to ruin Black bodies through schemes that still persist in societies like ours, even after two centuries of political independence from its colonial metropolis, Portugal. This is the first reason to consider decolonizing language in Brazil, aiming to break with the ruinous linguistic coloniality that affects Black bodies, whose effects are clearly visible in socioeconomic data, the country's HDI, World Bank reports, United Nations reports, etc. The other reason for this decolonial undertaking is to demonstrate how linguistic coloniality, maintained by language policies, ruins Black bodies in the teaching of Portuguese in post-colonial Brazil, denying the existence of "Pretuguês" (Black Portuguese) and the existence of such bodies, "since to speak is to exist absolutely for the other" (Fanon, 2008, p. 33, my translation).

Bringing this entire discussion to the forefront is a way to contribute to affirmative action aimed at the marginalized majority of the country and to strengthen Brazilian democracy. This is its social appeal. In terms of decolonial studies, the aim is to contribute to a Decolonial Linguistics, introducing the categories of linguistic coloniality and linguistic apparatus in the

first part of this text. Therefore, it is with these intentions and on these issues that this discussion has been developed, without losing sight of the fact that "decolonization is the encounter of two congenitally antagonistic forces, whose originality stems precisely from this kind of substantiation that the colonial situation secretes and nourishes" (Fanon, 2022, p. 32).

Therefore, this text revisits the discussion presented by Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* (Fanon, 2008) and the discussion conceived by Neusa Santos Souza in *Tornar-se negro* (Becoming Black), in addition to those found in the texts and essays of Lélia Gonzales in *Por um feminismo feminismo afro-latino-americano* (For an Afro-Latin American Feminism) and in Jacques Derrida's *Monolingualism of the Other*.

## 2. THE GRAMMATIZATION OF LANGUAGES: LINGUISTIC APPARATUS [DISPOSITIVE] AND [LINGUISTICS] COLONIALITY

European colonialism imposed the languages of its metropolises as a way of appropriating the body and forging the colonized being; that is, it was by using languages as linguistic devices that colonialism gave form to racism to separate, by skin color, the white colonists, owners of the language, from the non-white colonized speakers, demonstrating that the colonies had a language of domination, the language of the colonial dominator, a vehicle of violence that is not in itself anti-political; but "the native language of the metropolis and the way in which it does politics." (Nogueira, 2020, p.10 apud Araújo 2023, p.18-19, my translation).

This political imposition of the metropolis's native language to dominate the bodies of the colonized and subject their consciousness to the colonial regime, economically exploiting the force of their labor, will be referred to here as a [colonial] linguistic apparatus. In other words, a [colonial] linguistic apparatus (dispositive) refers to the imposition of the language of the dominator to subjugate the dominated through verbal language in discursive and non-discursive (institutional) situations, being responsible for making possible, in the act of speech, the verbal codification of the violence of colonialism or its expression in language, as well as racism, and for disseminating them through discursive and non-discursive practices (cf. Araújo, 2025, p. 82). This is, therefore, a concept inspired by that conceived by Foucault in his archeogenealogy as "a decidedly heterogeneous set that encompasses discourses, institutions, architectural organizations, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, and philanthropic propositions" (Foucault, 1979, p. 244, my translation).

It is from this point that one can speak of racism as a language whose discursive practice functions as a means to deterritorialize other bodies and subject them to colonial differentiation, which appears as a cog in colonialism to segregate these other bodies and to justify the abuses perpetrated by the colonizer and all kinds of atrocities that culminated in the "historical (discursive) ruin" of such bodies, with epistemicides and the domination of their lands, literally invaded; racism being a linguistic construction that occurs through a process of relational identification, based on the differentiation between these other bodies under domination and the bodies of the dominators.

From this perspective, racism became possible by using linguistic knowledge, which "is multiple and naturally begins in the consciousness of the speaking man" (Auroux, 1992, p. 16, my translation), to ruin bodies through discourse responsible for attributing racial inferiority to the non-white other. It was precisely in this way, through its discursive practice, that it established, in the colonial world, what Foucault called processes of identification and subjectivation (cf. Foucault, 1995), a strategy already used by the Holy See to ruin non-Christian bodies in relation to Christians, which made possible the emergence of antisemitism with the persecution of Jews and the witch hunts in the Medieval Era. But Hellenic culture was

perhaps the first to use this strategy, creating the term barbarian to mark difference as inferiority in relation to other peoples who spoke languages different from their own.

Regarding the history of Brazil, there is a colonial document, created during the reign of King José I by the Marquis of Pombal, which explicitly illustrates the reasons why the language of the metropolis needed to be imposed on the dominated peoples. This document, called the Directory of the Indians (or Pombaline Directory), further demonstrates the colonizer's contempt for local knowledge to justify such imposition, in the form of Christian pedantry, responsible for elaborating "dishonest equations" such as: "Christianity = civilization; paganism = savagery, from which only the abominable colonialist and racist consequences could result, whose victims would be the Indians [indigenous people], yellow people, and black people." (Césaire, 2020, p. 11, author's emphasis, added addendum).

And all of this can be seen in a small excerpt from this mid-18th-century document (1757), transcribed below, where one can read in detail how colonialism transformed the colonizer's language into a linguistic device to dominate the individual and their body in colonial territories, using as an argument the fact that:

It has always been a maxim inevitably practiced in all nations, which conquered new domains, to immediately introduce their own language to the conquered peoples, since it is indisputable that this is one of the most effective means to banish the barbarity of their old customs from rustic peoples and to have shown the experience that, at the same time that the use of the language of the prince who conquered them is introduced in them, also roots in them affection, veneration and obedience to the same prince. Therefore, observing this prudent and solid system in all the polished nations of the world, in this Conquest there was so much practice on the contrary, that only the first conquerors took care to establish in it the use of the language they call general, a truly abominable and diabolical invention, so that, private the Indians of all those means that could civilize them, remained in the rustic and barbaric subjection in which they have hitherto conserved themselves. To banish this pernicious abuse, one of the main cares of the principals will be to establish in their respective villages the use of the Portuguese language, not consenting in any way that the boys and girls who belong to the schools and all those Indians who are capable of instruction in these matters use the language proper to their nations, or to the general call, but only Portuguese, in the form that His Majesty has recommended in repeated orders, which until now have not been observed, with total spiritual and temporal ruin of the State. (Almeida, 1997, p.371 apud Araújo, 2021, p.4).

As can be observed on the surface of this excerpt, it was common practice to impose the language of the conquering invader to make domination over colonized peoples more effective. To this end, much brute force was used, as was customary, since there was much resistance culminating in constant revolts that were harshly suppressed; that is, colonial vassalage, in the service of the king, always promoted acts of colonial violence against the native peoples to achieve its mercantile objectives; thus, anyone caught speaking the general language or any other indigenous language suffered severe corporal punishment under the allegation that the language coined by the Jesuits was a "truly abominable and diabolical invention," while the

languages of the indigenous peoples should be eliminated for maintaining "the barbarity of their ancient customs," as shown.

Thus, this extreme measure occurred well after the Jesuits had already succeeded in grammatizing the native languages, conceiving the so-called general language to evangelize and exploit the labor of these peoples in their missions, describing and, at the same time, instrumentalizing the languages of the Tupy family to catechize and economically exploit the indigenous people, making use of "two technologies, which are still today the pillars of our metalinguistic knowledge: grammar and the dictionary" (Auroux, 1992, p. 65). Although the general language was not strictly the language of the dominator, the aforementioned passage also allows us to highlight that Brazil was the stage for two ways of using the linguistic device; one linked to the interests of the Holy See, represented by the Jesuit missions, and another linked to the mercantilist interests of the Portuguese metropolis, represented by the presence of the Portuguese State (cf. Araújo, 2025a; 2025b).

This *modus operandi* continues to reverberate in Brazil whenever someone is repressed for not speaking according to the supposed standard or cultivated norm, marked by the institutionalization of Portuguese language teaching in the country, which occurred with its inclusion in the official school curriculum. And this is one of the ways coloniality exists among us as a kind of historical link that maintains the harmful and violent schemes left by the colonial regime. It is a means of discriminating against "Black Portuguese," "the Africanization of Portuguese spoken in Brazil" (Gonzales, 2020, p. 54), functioning as a kind of invisible barbed wire that contributes to fueling linguistic racism in the country, which, here, is maintained by linguistic coloniality. This refers to the use of the colonizer's language as a means of forging linguistic forms responsible for disseminating racial prejudice and reinforcing Eurocentric thinking maintained as a legacy of knowledge and power over bodies, territory, or nation in a post-colonial stage or in the process of decolonization.

This is very similar to what Veronelli chose to call the coloniality of language, referring to "a process of racialization of colonized populations into so many communicative agents (that is, into so many possible interlocutors) that begins with the Conquest of America and continues to this day" (Veronelli, 2015, p. 34). Here, we have chosen to translate this last expression as a [colonial] linguistic device, since the schemes of subjugation, such as the racialization of populations dominated by the colonial regime, were inculcated and transmitted socially through both discursive and non-discursive practices during the colonization phase.

Thus, while the linguistic apparatus concerns the discursive and non-discursive practices that arise as a consequence of the linguistic imposition in question; linguistic coloniality, which succeeds colonialism, in a kind of re-actualization of the structure inherited by the local elite with the independence of the former colonies; would be, precisely, the ideological state and its effects that emerge from the imposition of the linguistic variety of the dominator as the privileged form, the one that is associated with national literature, with the lexicon that appears in dictionaries, in the standard form of grammars, in legislation, in short, it is the linguistic mentality that stems from such a state with its effects.

So, at this discursive crossroads, it is a tribute to Quijano, who was the first to use this term, conceiving it thus:

Coloniality is one of the constitutive and specific elements of the global pattern of capitalist power. It is sustained by the imposition of a *racial/ethnic classification of the world's population* as the cornerstone of said power pattern and operates on each of the planes, means and dimensions, material and subjective, of everyday social existence and

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the societal scale. It originates and globalizes in the Americas. (Quijano, 2009, p. 73, my translation, emphasis added).

However, as a reconfiguration of colonial power and Eurocentrism in the present day, coloniality reuses the same linguistic device, structured from the Socratic-Platonic model, to maintain and sustain such classification; that is, it continues to be ordered by the same logocentric binary system, "whose scheme materializes in language in two poles: one positive and the other negative, that is, in binary schemes, such as: good and evil; heaven and hell; life and death; true and false; God and the devil; man and woman; white and black; civilized and barbaric, etc." (Araújo, 2022, p. 80). The effect of this classification, in countries like Brazil, reveals that, even today, black people are forced to have, consciously or unconsciously, two dimensions: "one with their fellow human beings and another with white people" (Fanon, 2008, p. 33). Therefore, most will behave "differently with white people and with other black people." (Fanon, 2008, p.33). For this reason,

There is no doubt that this division is a direct consequence of the colonial adventure... And no one dares to contest that it feeds its main vein in the heart of the various theories that made the black man the middle ground in the development from ape to man. These are objective evidences that account for reality. (Fanon, 2008, p. 33, my translation).

In socioeconomic and psychiatric terms, the effects of this racial classification continue to maintain power through racial socioeconomic imbalance, fueling racist discourses throughout the capitalist world with the claim that this is a result of genetic conditions of the black race and other non-whites (indigenous and Asian), although the public health physician and psychiatrist Juliano Moreira, who was a black man, had already indicated, in the first half of the 20th century, that the health problems and social maladjustments attributed to the biological conditions of the black race were, in fact, a reflection of this fission whose effects cause "alcoholism, syphilis, and nervous and mental degenerations in populations lacking such conditions, especially blacks (including mixed-race people) who, historically and predominantly, lived on the margins of society" (Araújo, 2024, p. 17). So, we have here a public health and economic problem that are maintained by coloniality and its linguistic-racial apparatus (Araújo, 2025), because, as Lélia Gonzales rightly observed,

From colonial times to the present day, we can see the existence of a clear separation regarding the physical space occupied by the dominant and the dominated. The natural place of the dominant white group is large, spacious dwellings, located in the most beautiful corners of the city or the countryside and duly protected by different types of policing: from the old overseers, slave catchers, henchmen, etc., to the formally constituted police. From the plantation house and the townhouse to the beautiful buildings and residences of today, the criterion has been the same. The natural place of the black person is, evidently, the opposite. From the slave quarters to the favelas, tenements, basements, squatter settlements, flooded areas, and 'housing' complexes (whose models are the ghettos of developed

countries) of today, the criterion has also been symmetrically the same: the racial division of spaces. (Gonzales, 2022, p.21-22, my translation).

Therefore, this colonial division, put into practice throughout Latin America and parts of the United States, forged, by force and fire, Black subjectivities through this linguistic-racial device whose strength was potentiated by the articulation of language with physical and psychological violence to promote ethnocide, subjugating Black people to a subordinate identity and a subjectivity of inferiority in relation to the Eurocentric white. For this and other reasons, "it is necessary to deal with the phenomenon of language to decolonize being" (Araújo, 2023, pp. 18-19). This is why linguistics plays a very important role in this process of decolonizing being, as it is an indispensable component in the remedy that will begin the treatment to cure the psychopathologies caused by the colonial experience. Finally, it is necessary to measure the role of language to understand its importance in a scenario dominated by the artifice called coloniality, with the main objective of disarming the linguistic-racial apparatus, linguistic coloniality, and the grammatization of languages (cf. Araújo, 2025). To this end, these three concepts were explored in this part of the discussion undertaken here.

### **3. LANGUAGE EDUCATION: THE MONOLINGUALISM OF THE OTHER AND THE DECOLONIZATION OF THE COLONIAL LANGUAGE.**

Linguistic coloniality is always associated with language education and articulated both with grammatization and the linguistic-racial apparatus, colonial legacies that operate, in Foucauldian terms, as a will to truth in social and political institutions and in official education systems in countries colonized by European metropolises. (cf. Foucault, 1996; Araújo, 2020).

It is through linguistic coloniality that the idea that only what comes from the whitewashed Old World has value is maintained in modernity and postmodernity; while what comes from other parts of the globe would only have value if it had the judgment of someone from there, which would justify "the distinction between metropolitan societies and the [former] colonial territories" (Sousa Santos, 2007, p. 72, added addendum).

In practical terms, it can be said that this is what causes what, in Brazil, is conventionally called "mongrel dog syndrome," that is, the feeling of inferiority that a person from the Global South has in relation to Europe and the USA [Global North], because, as Nêgo Bispo said: "The colonialists say that we have no culture when we don't behave in their way" (Santos, 2023, p. 23). In theoretical terms, this would be what Fanon (2008) called the zone of non-being and what Sousa Santos (2007) chose to call the abyssal line [of the abyss, abysmal], that is, a kind of imaginary line nurtured by thought that harbors the idea that there is a line to separate that which has value, being visible to the eyes of the great world economies (former colonial metropolises), from that which supposedly has no value for them [such as: *anima nullius, terra nullius*]; therefore, without economic value, non-existent due to "hegemonic principles and practices" (Sousa Santos, 2007, p. 76, my translation). And, in this case, "non-existence means not existing in any relevant or comprehensible way of being" (Sousa Santos, 2007, p. 71, my translation). Consequently, only those from the Global North have the legitimacy to issue, within this thought structure, a value judgment on something.

Therefore, "this state of affairs constitutes the original project of modern epistemology and legality, even though the abyssal line between the metropolitan and the colonial has shifted, transforming the colonial into an internal dimension of the metropolitan." (Sousa Santos, 2007, p. 83). This artifice is explicitly materialized in the fragment of the Pombaline Directory presented earlier, clearly demonstrating the division imposed by European colonialism, which

imposed this will to truth in order to establish the abyssal line so that European mercantilism could exploit the territories and their bodies in the "New World" and the "Newest World".

In the case of Brazil, in addition to the "mongrel complex" – a feeling of inferiority in relation to everything that comes from the Global North – there is another effect of this thinking: the idea that, among [acculturated] Brazilians, nobody speaks Portuguese well because the language came from Portugal; that is, there is a feeling of linguistic inferiority because it is believed that those born in Brazil speak Portuguese "incorrectly," even though it is their only language. Proof of this is that every foreign language teacher has probably heard the following statement in schools, anywhere in the country: "I don't know how to speak Portuguese properly, why would I want to study English, teacher?"

This question of the present time, which is still an effect of the Pombaline Directory, does not differ much from the problem raised by Jacques Derrida in an International Colloquium on "the dilemmas of Francophonie outside of France" which took place at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge (USA). The year was 1992. The text of his lecture, called *Renvois d'ailleurs or Echoes from elsewhere*, later became the book *Le Monolinguisme de l'autre ou la prothèse d'origine* (cf. Derrida, 1996, p.31).

At the colloquium, to illustrate the aforementioned problem, he said: "I have at least one language, [but] it is not mine" (Derrida, 1996, p. 13; added addition, my translation). Someone might be wondering: how can a person have only one language and that language not be their own? It is impossible; such an assertion is incoherent or makes no sense. Others might even think: This is absurd, because there is no logic to support this statement (cf. Derrida, 1996, p. 15).

Well, this "contradictory" proposition is a reference to the time when Derrida had his French citizenship confiscated during the Nazi occupation of France. As is known, he was a French-Maghrebi Jew, born in Algeria while it was still under French rule, specifically in the city of El Biar (الأبيار), very close to the capital Algiers (العاصمة الجزائر). Derrida recalls, when introducing the topic of citizenship, that France had granted French citizenship to the Jews of Algeria on October 24, 1870, by decree created by Crémieux (Derrida, 1996, p. 36). However, less than a century later, this citizenship was revoked; "Certainly not by the German Occupying Power," which never set foot in Algeria, as Derrida asserted (1996, p. 35, my translation, emphasis added).

As far as we know, it was the work of the French; or rather, an exclusively French decision that, around 1940, became the traumatic dilemma that directly affected Derrida's life; and "the prohibition stemmed from an educational system with all the colonial censorship." (Derrida, 1996, p. 66, my translation). In other words, it was on this occasion that his French citizenship was revoked and he was forbidden from speaking French, his only language. And, as can be observed, the first prohibition took place at school as "a school thing, something that comes to you at school less as a measure or decision, more as a pedagogical device." (Derrida, 1996, p. 66, my translation). This experience makes it clear that "this monolingualism of the other has a certain aspect and the threatening traits of colonial hegemony." (Derrida, 1996, p. 129, my translation). "The homogeneous [colonial] hegemony", imposed by a colonial country like France (Derrida, 1996, p. 56, my translation, added note).

So, this monolingualism of the other, implemented by laws like the Directorate of Indians, can be translated as: "here are the owners of your language," or rather, "the true owners of this language are those who colonized your country, the Europeans. They are the owners of the language that made them civilized." And the education system is the first to show this, "without smiling and without concern," to those who occupy the place of students [without their own brilliance] every time they represent a threat to the language in its everyday coloniality.

Therefore, this is why a large portion of students in Brazil say they don't know how to speak Portuguese properly, even though it is their only language.

Ultimately, Derrida's emblematic case demonstrates that colonial homo-hegemony [homo-hégémonie] is the idea behind what is here called the linguistic-racial apparatus and, at the same time, shows some of its effects on bodies under the dominion of colonialism, today dominated by coloniality, a law that maintains the zone of non-being or abyssal line in operation in the present time, as previously stated. It also makes evident that the essence of citizenship cannot be something natural, nor can it arise by decree, nor should it be conditioned by a given language of a particular geopolitical space, because linguistic citizenship does not exist, does it?

Therefore, citizenship appears in this scenario as a form of granting rights and should not be seen as an essence in itself (Derrida, 1996, p. 34). On the other hand, Derrida's considerations are also crucial to this discussion because they reflect on what a language can be, what citizenship is not, and what identity, cultural belonging, nationality, monolingualism, and bilingualism could be, also bringing an idea of language as law, which will be briefly developed here to become a key concept. Furthermore, this discussion also allows us to think about the educational system through linguistic education, whose model is that of hegemonic monolingualism, in which the colonized person's mother tongue is not their own language, but will always be the language of the other.

Well, if language has been used to colonize being, segregating it by racialized skin color, it is through language that being can be liberated from such a scheme of imprisonment of the body and soul (anima), and language itself can be liberated from such colonization. If the first prohibitions imposed by the monolingualism of the other occur in the school space, it is through it that language will be decolonized. It is there that change can be managed with a decolonial linguistic education implemented by an equally decolonial linguistic policy based on a decolonial linguistic planning. And the term decolonial juxtaposed with linguistics, education, and planning can only have a political meaning "towards a new humanism..." (Fanon, 2008, p. 25).

This requires a decolonial relationship policy, that is, an anti-racist policy that manages to break with coloniality and with the linguistic-racial apparatus. And how is this done? With what Nêgo Bispo called "practices of the denominations of modes and speeches" through the bewitchment of language (cf. Santos, 2023, p. 13, emphasis added). But, for this, it is necessary to plan, to have in mind a linguistic plan, a language like Portuguese and a country like Brazil, in addition to ethics, the courage of truth and love, as reflected upon in the last two parts of this discussion.

#### **4. LANGUAGE PLANNING: ETHNIC-RACIAL RELATIONS AND THE TEACHING OF BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE**

The Pombaline Directory is proof that colonial language policies existed, responsible for dilemmas such as Derrida's, which shows their effects, with their excessively violent results (cf. Araújo, 2025). So, there is no doubt about it! Or is there? There is also no doubt that all language planning requires a language policy; that is, planning always proceeds from a language policy that gives it form and puts it into practice in the educational system as language education. This assertion carries the same meaning that the term "policy" has in Paulo Freire, precisely when he stated that "educating is a political act" in a time still marked by the political prohibitions that led to his forced exile (cf. Freire, 1980, p. 6). And, certainly, he was moved by true courage, because he was an ethical subject, he had ethics, "not the lesser, restricted

ethics of the market, which obediently bows to the interests of profit" (Freire, 1996, p. 15). But, the "universal ethics of the human being", as he himself chose to call it (Freire, 1996, p.15).

Therefore, language planning, promoted by a decolonial policy for teaching a language imposed by the colonial system such as Portuguese, must also deal with violence, since "decolonization is always a violent phenomenon" (Fanon, 2022, p. 31). For this reason, above all, such planning can only be an act driven by the courage of truth, by universal ethics, and by the love that opposes "the lovelessness contained in the violence of the oppressors, even when it is disguised as false generosity" (Freire, 1987, p. 13). But, by way of illustration, decolonial linguistic planning can be compared to a surgical act to remove a cancerous tumor, which requires technical preparation from professionals, their altruistic love, surgical violence, and the body's healing process. But, above all, it is an act of love and, as such, requires the courage to make the surgical act happen. Therefore, in decolonial linguistic planning, universal ethics, love, and the courage to face the challenges that coloniality imposes on those who wish to fight against its cycle of power cannot be lacking.

The language policy that appears in the country's curriculum documents is responsible for serving the economic interests of the global market; which demands a certain level of equality among its consumers so that a large portion of the population can consume its products without the obstacles of local identities, which lead an individual in Piauí to prefer drinking a refreshing Cajuína (a cashew-based drink) rather than Coca-Cola, or someone to prefer eating the traditional acarajé (a type of fritter) from Bahia rather than a hamburger from a McDonald's franchise in Salvador; or even eating a pastel (a type of fried pastry) with sugarcane juice at a street fair in Brás, São Paulo, the country's great metropolis and financial center. (Araújo, 2024, p.22, my translation).

The above observation only demonstrates that such a policy is therefore governed by the ethics of profit, although it has been disseminated as "inclusive" and "democratic," reinforcing the idea of "competitiveness and privileges disguised as merit [or meritocracy]" (Menezes de Souza, 2019, p. 255, added note). Thus, if a certain level or degree of equality is required, it is because it obeys the demands of the global market, which means that it has no commitment to racial equity, to democracy itself, to opportunity for all, but to capitalism, which maintains the updating of colonialism through its contemporary phase called coloniality by Quijano (cf. Quijano, 2009). It is also responsible for maintaining the abyssal line or zone of non-being (cf. Sousa Santos, 2007; Fanon, 2008).

Therefore, this shows that "it would actually be a naive attitude to expect the dominant classes to develop a form of education that would enable the dominated classes to perceive social injustices in a critical way" (Freire, 1984, p. 89). For this reason, the courage of truth is necessary to confront these reactionary forces that are everywhere and, especially, behind the first prohibitions of monolingualism that occur in schools and universities where "linguistics is no exception" (Rajagopalan, 2003, p. 72). (Or can someone prove otherwise? That such forces do not dominate it, determining what to study [as Bourdieu would think]?).

Well, the "science of language" has never been exempt from market ethics and its commitment to the will to truth imposed by the abyssal line to dominate those in the zone of non-being, since language plays a very important role in the domination and control of colonized bodies, and now, in the so-called Cognitive Revolution, responsible for studies on Artificial Intelligence in the field of technology. Capital besieges it all the time. This justifies

the distrust and caution that should be exercised, considered by some to be neutral and apolitical, since it is supposedly free from ideologies and socioeconomic pressures. Therefore,

Decoloniality is a territory of languages that deals with the Western theoretical construct of language as something that serves a “necropolitics” and a “necro-power” to dominate bodies and life in the potential for death of human beings, by imposing a model of thought and a worldview that promotes the epistemicide of dominated peoples. (Araújo, 2022, p. 77, my translation).

In this case, it will first be necessary to decolonize the [Eurocentric] linguistics of the will to truth that usurps scientific truth with the false idea of neutrality, which dominates its discursive practices and its identity as a discipline; or perhaps it will be necessary to create a decolonial linguistics whose scientific rigor does not fall into the fallacy of the discourse of scientific neutrality under the pretext of not dealing with universal ethics and the political in an explicit, transparent way, because, as is known,

There is no neutrality in teaching [and in the sciences], everything is ideological, and this implies that thinking about this field of knowledge/power implies thinking about it as a structure of language within Western metaphysical language, a place of construction and deconstruction of systems of representation, of which education would only be a subsystem (Araújo, Ferreira, 2011, p.97, my translation, added addition).

Overcoming these forces, decolonial language planning, supported by a decolonial language policy, will still have to race against time because society urgently needs the results of its actions; that is, even before putting them into practice, they are already under pressure from urgency and from conservative elites who constantly conspire for their downfall in order to maintain the current situation.

In these historical conditions of production, decolonial language planning is, by its very nature, political and anti-racist, and must confront a language policy governed by coloniality that maintains racism through language. As such, it cannot ignore the existing relationship between language teaching and ethnic-racial relations, recognizing that "the curriculum constitutes the core of the institutionalized process of education" (Silva, 2004, p. 184, my translation).

In the case of Brazil, it is necessary to institutionally recognize the existence of "Pretuguês" as the result of the Africanization of Portuguese, as a form of linguistic resistance to the colonial language, in those other Atlantic shores of the Global South, "and, consequently, the very Africanization of Brazilian culture." (Gonzales, 2020, p. 54, my translation).

This recognition must impact the teaching of Brazilian Portuguese; that is, it must be part of the country's linguistic education through linguistic planning developed from a decolonial approach so that the predominantly Black population can have its language respected. This is because one cannot decolonize language while maintaining the barbed wire that arose to ensure the subjugation and subordination of Afro-Brazilians to whites through the racial linguistic device; "after all, it is in and through language that our personalities are constantly subjected to a process of reformulation or what the Canadian philosopher called 'self-fashioning'" (Rajagopalan, 2003, p. 70, added). Therefore, decolonizing language means decolonizing the

ethnic-racial relations instituted by the grayer side of modernity, which is coloniality. In this case, it is necessary to remember that it was

modernity that created the school, that created the nation, that created the concept of language as a standard, as a norm, and that did what? It spread social inequality, it spread racism, colonization, in short, a series of social ills based on the concept of one or nothing. (Menezes de Souza, 2019, p. 254, my translation, emphasis added).

Although multiculturalism is part of the reality of most peoples on the planet, including Brazil, coloniality has maintained its power by preserving these same concepts "inherited from the 19th century, when the motto 'One nation, one language, one culture' prevailed." (Rajagopalan, 2003, p.25, my translation).

The utopian idea that the country is a monolingual nation comes from this motto coined by modernity; but the reality is that Brazil has always been a multilingual and multicultural country, even before being shaped by European colonization, when various indigenous languages existed here. What lies behind this homo-hegemonic ideology? The maintenance of power relations, the maintenance of existing ethnic-racial relations, whose reality the humorist Millôr Fernandes ironically summarizes as follows: "there is no racism in Brazil because black people know their place" (cf. Gonzales, 2020, p. 131). And what place is that? The one that the language of racism confers upon them, the scheme of which Fanon described and analyzed in *Black Skin, White Masks*.

In the current scenario governed by coloniality, the Portuguese language and its teaching continue to be one of the most subtle means by which the Black and Indigenous population of the country is culturally and biologically whitened, since it is in language that racism has taken shape, reproducing racial inferiority, as previously stated. Therefore, it is no coincidence that the variant considered cultured is based on the speech of the dominant [Eurocentric] white class, having the privilege of being taught exclusively in schools "to ensure the authority of speakers who live in more urbanized areas in contrast to the periphery, among other territorialities" (Araújo, 2024, p. 20, my translation).

Official data on racial inequalities in Brazil, analyzed by the Center for Studies and Data on Racial Inequalities (CEDRA), have indicated that these inequalities have color and address; that is, they reflect the effects of language, showing that there is a direct relationship between low performance in learning Portuguese and the socioeconomic conditions affecting the black population of the country. This is the main reason to consider including "Pretuguês" (a blend of Portuguese and Black Portuguese) in the school curriculum as a way to address this problem, promoting the appreciation of black identity through language, since the teaching of Brazilian Portuguese is still under the influence of coloniality, reflecting the ethnic-racial relations of the old colonial world order, as mentioned earlier.

Therefore, within this discursive framework, the theme of ethnic-racial relations and the teaching of Brazilian Portuguese, in the face of "Pretuguês" (a term coined by the Portuguese "pretuguês"), appears as a sociopolitical necessity aimed at its decolonization through affirmative actions focused on linguistic planning. The motivation for this is the historical conditions of production stemming from the repercussions of the unfolding and discursive practices that emerged, above all, from Laws No. 10.639/2003 and No. 11.645/2008, which made the study of Indigenous and Afro-Brazilian history and culture mandatory in basic education establishments in Brazil. This is because it has been observed that:

There are historical and epistemological erasures present in curricula, proposals, and educational practices, both in Basic Education and Higher Education, which will only be overcome if the educational field and scientific production understand themselves as spaces that need to be decolonized. (Gomes, 2021, p. 437, my translation).

These two legal milestones were essential for the institutionalization of what is called ethnic-racial relations education, which has as its main objective "the formation of citizens, women and men committed to promoting conditions of equality in the exercise of social, political, and economic rights, the rights to be, live, and think, inherent to different ethnic-racial and social affiliations." (Gonçalves e Silva, 2007, p. 490, my translation).

However, this proposition to decolonize language and ethnic-racial relations in the teaching of Brazilian Portuguese was also based on decolonial studies articulated with applied linguistics, plus the indignation of a Black body that daily lives with:

Situations such as the genocide of Black youth; the femicide that plagues the lives of Black women; stray bullets that only find the Black bodies of the slums and favelas; police violence, which historically marks the lives of the Black population, are reported daily by the media, denounced by social movements, and discussed by Black and non-Black digital influencers committed to the anti-racist struggle. (Gomes, 2021, p. 438, my translation).

In each of these situations, a violent effect of language, a gesture preceded by an act of saying that took shape, becoming the action of someone who is consciously or unconsciously at the service of coloniality, whose racism is its most cunning and harmful expression, widespread in discursive practices and reflected in non-discursive ones.

The need to decolonize language and ethnic-racial relations emerges in the face of this situation and these historical conditions of production, and the path to such decolonization can only be through the institutionalization of "Pretuguês" (Black Portuguese), presented as a form of inclusion and valorization of Black identities, because

The more people participate in the process of their own education, the greater their participation will be in defining what kind of production to produce, and for what purpose and why, and the greater their participation will also be in their own development [involvement]. The more people become themselves, the better democracy will be. The less we ask people what they want and about their expectations, the less democracy there will be. (Freire, 2003, p. 149, my translation, emphasis and addendum added).

However, such institutionalization must be interpreted or understood without the usual pejorative exoticism or racial subjugation attributed to Black identities. This means that "Black Portuguese" should have the same political value as the so-called standard language, which requires linguistic planning articulated with other affirmative actions to overcome the barrier of ethnic-racial inequalities in Brazil. These are the terms of our decolonization of language, which is a "counter-colonial" action, in the words of Nêgo Bispo!

Well, if education systems are used as a political means to maintain or modify the appropriation of discourses, with the knowledge and power that these bring with them, as

Foucault (1996, p. 45) observed, then it is through such systems that actions can be put into practice to decolonize the language and, consequently, ethnic-racial relations with the institutional inclusion of "Pretuguês" (Black Portuguese), recognizing it as a means by which Black identities occur without the subjugation of the "standard language".

In other words, it can be said that the decolonization of Brazilian Portuguese must begin with the process of institutionalizing "Pretuguês" (Black Portuguese), including it in the school curriculum as part of affirmative action policies, in the same way that occurred with the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture, because "Pretuguês" needs to be part of institutionalized knowledge "so that feelings of inferiority and superiority are broken from the outset, and judgments based on prejudice are disregarded," borrowing the words of Petronilha Beatriz Gonçalves e Silva (2007, p. 490), responsible for the report of CNE/CP 3/2004, which gave rise to the National Curriculum Guidelines for Education on Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture, in compliance with Law 10.639/2003, which amended the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (Law 9394/96).

## 5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This crossroads text presented a discussion about the need to decolonize language and race relations in the teaching of Brazilian Portuguese as a more incisive way to promote racial equality in Brazil, with the inclusion of "Pretuguês" (Black Portuguese) in the school curriculum through an anti-racist and decolonial language policy, complementing other existing affirmative action initiatives. However, the approach taken here also pointed out that racism invented the racial question by using the linguistic-racial device to exploit dominated peoples and their territories, forging a system of inferiority based on the racialization of such dominated populations in the colonial world, using the languages of the dominator to materialize in discursive and non-discursive practices through such a linguistic-racial device, a thesis enunciated in this decolonial discussion.

Therefore, there is no doubt that it was the use of the linguistic sign, articulated with the metaphysical binary scheme, that made possible the emergence of the abyssal line, one of the most cunning and inhumane forms in history that made use of violence, segregation, and control over subjugated populations.

In this system, the language of the former colonizer was used as a verbal whip to repress the physical body, insofar as every saying is a doing, and this is how the languages of the metropolises created racism by imposing the disconcerting inferiority that still whips beings under the state of coloniality in the established zone of non-being. Therefore, in many parts of the world, the language of the former colonizer continues to be the language of the other, even two centuries after Independence, as in the case of Brazil.

Derrida's dilemma, born in Africa, was evoked at this textual crossroads to illustrate the contradictions unleashed by the monolingualism of the other, the means by which the modern idea expressed in the motto "One nation, one language, one culture" has been put into practice, both in the former colonies and in the old metropolises, where it was first tested, as mentioned before. And, such monolingualism of the other could only be under the dominion of Law as language or the language of Law, as Derrida (1996, p. 69) said; that is, monolingualism would be under the force of law, which means that one thing is language, an immaterial linguistic entity, another thing is law as a political logic used to dominate a language, its speakers, politics itself, and to create barriers such as the abyssal line or zone of non-being.

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