ENGLISH TEACHING FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION PURPOSES: AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS FROM A DECOLONIAL PERSPECTIVE

O ENSINO DE INGLÊS PARA FINS DE INTERNACIONALIZAÇÃO: UMA ANÁLISE AUTOETNOGRÁFICA A PARTIR DE UMA PERSPECTIVA DECOLONIAL

Nayara Stefanie Mandarino Silva[1]

ABSTRACT: Considering the understanding of internationalization as a process permeated with tensions and complexities, given its link with modern/colonial thinking, I engage in an autoethnographic study on my experience in course planning within Languages without Borders (LwB). In this sense, in this paper, I seek to analyze three courses which I developed within LwB in 2019, from a decolonial perspective. The (self)analysis has highlighted in which moments I delink and in which I reproduce modern/colonial thinking, either by reinforcing one of its aspects or by not exploring colonial issues. It has also highlighted the conflicts and contradictions involved in the process of trying to teach English from a critical perspective, gesturing towards options otherwise.
Keywords: English language teaching; Languages without Borders; Decoloniality.

RESUMO: Considerando o entendimento da internacionalização como um processo permeado por tensões e complexidades, dado o seu link com o pensamento moderno/colonial, eu desenvolvo um estudo autoetnográfico acerca da minha experiência no planejamento de cursos no âmbito do Idiomas sem Fronteiras (IsF). Nesse sentido, neste artigo, eu busco analisar três cursos que desenvolvi no âmbito do IsF em 2019, a partir de uma perspectiva decolonial. A (auto)análise destacou em que momentos eu me desprendo ou reproduzo o pensamento moderno/colonial, seja por meio do reforço de um de seus aspectos ou por não explorar questões coloniais. Também foram evidenciados os conflitos e contradições envolvidos no processo de tentar ensinar inglês a partir de uma perspectiva crítica, em direção a opções *otherwise*.
Palavras-chave: Ensino de língua inglesa; Idiomas sem Fronteiras; Decolonialidade.

1 Starting the conversation

The internationalization of higher education is a recent phenomenon, which, according to authors like Knight (1999) and Szyszlo (2016), emerges in response to globalization – even

---
[1] Doutoranda em Letras na Universidade Federal do Paraná – UFPR.

though one influences the other. In Brazil, the mobility program Science without Borders (SwB), started in 2011, increased discussions and initiatives towards internationalization, despite mostly sending students to universities in other countries – especially those in the Global North. The launch of this program led to many critiques, given the issues made visible, which I understand as closely related to modernity/coloniality. For instance, prioritizing certain areas that, in the terms of the Decree (Brasil, 2011), would contribute to the Brazilian economy. I agree with Menezes de Souza (2018), however, when he points out that SwB is strategically complicit with neoliberalism, considering its aim to bring about social justice. This program is one example of the tensions inherent to the internationalization process, especially in Brazil, where a great number of universities are public and do not need to attract (international) students and their fees.

SwB also led to the creation of other programs, such as English without Borders (BRASIL, 2012). The latter sought to prepare undergraduate students to proficiency exams required by Anglophone universities – the ones best ranked. As the example illustrates, English is emphasized in the internationalization process to a point where offering education in this language started to be understood as a synonym of internationalizing a university (De Wit, 2011; Fabricius; Mortensen; Haberland, 2016). In this context, English becomes the currency through which the communication of knowledge (constructed in universities) happens. Languages then, especially English – the focus in this paper –, are often "conceived of as objects that exist out there, disembodied tools, autonomous elements that are reified as commodities to be acquired, bought and sold" (Jordão; Martinez, 2021, p. 579). As a neutral means of achieving something, there is the frequent assumption that the language is one, i.e., there is little or no regard to varieties and locality.

Considering that, teaching English involves challenges, complexities, and questions. I often ponder: What can be done to change this scenario? How am I complicit with a system that exists because of coloniality? How can I act without reproducing what I critique? There is no easy answer; actually, I am not sure there is a difficult one, given our epistemic blindness (Maldonado-Torres, 2004), that is, our incapacity of thinking otherwise. In fact, as Stein and Silva (2020, p. 562) put it, moving towards the possibility of education otherwise "requires that we develop the discernment to map our responsibilities alongside what it is possible to do within our own contexts – recognizing that however we decide to engage will be problematic, difficult, contradictory, and offer no guaranteed outcomes".

In this paper, I engage in self-reflection as I analyze, from a decolonial perspective, three courses which I developed within Languages without Borders (LwB) in 2019. The program was created in 2014 (Brasil, 2014), replacing English without Borders, and later amplified (Brasil, 2016). I joined LwB in 2018 when it was still linked to the Ministry of Education (MEC) and continued as a teacher until 2020, experiencing the transition of the program to a network – the ANDIFES-LwB network (Associação Nacional dos Dirigentes das Instituições Federais de Ensino Superior, 2019). Here, however, I do not discuss LwB itself nor its decrees and documents, rather I focus on my own process of teaching English in the program and later network, specifically my choices for the classes, difficulties and challenges of attempting to work from a critical perspective. To do so, I engage in an autoethnography (Eriksson, 2010; Pardo, 2019), observing my own praxis.

This paper is organized in the following way. First, I discuss (de)coloniality, considering higher education – context where I taught. In the following topic, I address autoethnography and present my experience within LwB in general terms. The next topic refers to the (auto)analysis of the three courses I developed during the year of 2019. Finally, I reflect on some

of the challenges and complexities of intelligibility and put some considerations forward.

2 On (de)coloniality

As per Mignolo (2017), Quijano began discussions around coloniality. Mignolo himself has also explored and elaborated the concept further in his work. The latter understands coloniality as the darker side of modernity, that is, modernity would not exist without coloniality (Mignolo, 2011).

While colonialism – as a political and economic system based on the domination of a group or nation over another and on the construction of empires – has ended, coloniality survives. It refers to "long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations," in the words of Maldonado-Torres (2007, p. 243). It emerges with capitalism and is grounded on the hierarchization of differences, with the domination and imposition of a group over others, based especially on the idea of race.

Quijano (2000) contends that, with the emergence of America, so are originated new forms of relation of labor/exploitation around capital, with the division between the conquering and conquered, superior and inferior, based on race – he calls this coloniality of power. Grounded on this division, populations were classified within a power structure in which the group considered superior got to control resources. In this sense,

> the exclusive control by colonial 'Whites' of the resources of production in America, first, and the in the rest of the world; along with the control of commercial capital and the concentration of the commodification of the labor force for 'White' workers, all of this meant that capital, as a specific social relation, could be concentrated in the geographic region that then received the name of Europe (Quijano, 2000, p. 217).

Europe, therefore, emerges as the center, imposing its ideals upon the world. The myth of a superior and developed civilization worked as a means to justify the domination over populations (the periphery), considered primitive, underdeveloped, and stuck in the past. In the process of Western imposition, other ways of knowing and being were silenced (Bernardino-Costa; Grosfoguel, 2016).

With the formation and expansion of this system, the idea that humans and world are separated and independent was spread; knowledge, in such process, was a way to understand and control the world, as Castro-Gómez (2007) claims. To achieve 'real' knowledge, subjectivity should be left aside so the object of study, observed from a disembodied position, would not be 'contaminated' with empiricism and doubt. In this sense, human beings as the center of the world, position previously attributed to God, would make disembodied science and observe from outside (*en el punto cero*). Castro-Gómez (2007, p. 83) outlines that "*la ciencia moderna pretende ubicarse en el punto cero de observación para ser como Dios, pero no logra observar como Dios. Por eso hablamos de la hybris, del pecado de la desmesura*"[2]. The author names this epistemic model '*hybris del punto cero*' [hubris of the zero point].

---

[2] "Modern science aims to be located in the zero point of observation to be like God, but it cannot observe like God. This is why we talk about hubris, the sin of excess" (Castro-Gómez, 2007, p.83, my translation).

The aim, therefore, was to achieve universal knowledge disembodied from space and time and independent from any relationships. As Grosfoguel (2007) puts it, the epistemic subject who gets to 'the truth' has no identity or body and is not related to anyone else or any power positions. Anchored in this model, Europe was self-proclaimed the original point, where knowledge is created, and the point of arrival – the developed, updated model others ought to become.

Knowing and being are entangled in this narrative (I think therefore I am, Descartes's *ego cogito*); however, as Maldonado-Torres (2007, p. 252) reminds us, the *ego cogito* was preceded by the *ego conquiro*, so "beneath the 'I think' we can read 'others do not think', and behind the 'I am' it is possible to locate the philosophical justification for the idea that 'others are not' or do not have being." The *damnés*, who do not think and are not, have their humanity denied, and death becomes part of their existence. The exclusion of other ways of knowing becomes an instrument to deny ways of being, in a "process whereby the forgetfulness of ethics as a transcendental moment that founds subjectivity turns into the production of a world in which exceptions to ethical relationships become the norm" (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, p. 259).

Decoloniality emerges in response to coloniality in its different faces, questioning the effects and presence of coloniality. According to Maldonado-Torres (2007), it includes interventions in different levels (power, knowledge, being). Mignolo (2007) adds that decoloniality is a process of de-linking from coloniality towards a pluri-versality, rather than the sought universality of modern/colonial thinking, in which knowledge is always seen in its locality. By de-linking, alternatives *to* modernity can start being imagined.

> De-coloniality, then, means working toward a vision of human life that is not dependent upon or structured by the forced imposition of one ideal of society over those that differ, which is what modernity/ coloniality does and, hence, where decolonization of the mind should begin. The struggle is for changing the terms in addition to the content of the conversation (Mignolo, 2007, p. 459).

In this sense, to think of a world where different ways of knowing and being co-exist, without the imposition of one over the others, Mignolo (2007) calls for a decolonialization of our minds; however, using the grammar of modernity/coloniality is not enough to de-link, so changing the terms of the conversation is also necessary. To walk towards epistemic decolonization, the author suggests exposing limitations of the politics governing knowledge production and understanding. Moreover, we should also expand the practice of localizing knowledge and understanding both geographically and bodily. He highlights, nonetheless, that there are diverse ways of practicing decoloniality; in fact, to defend one 'right' way to do it would go against its very purpose.

Considering that I address English teaching in a higher-education context, I will briefly discuss some points in relation to universities. Castro-Gómez (2007) explains that the modern university follows modern/colonial foundations, especially the '*hybris del punto cero*' [hubris of the zero point]. One example is the division in disciplines, based on the idea that knowledge of reality can only be achieved if one divides it in small parts to be analyzed, which leads to the disconnection of its fragments. Additionally, within disciplines, knowledge is selected, limits are established as to what should (not) be considered, and canons are defined. Castro-Gómez (2007) also highlights that the divisions in colleges and departments are related to the control of knowledge 'belonging' to disciplines and the attempt to get more capital, which explains the

competition for resources among these sectors. However, with postmodern capitalism (and globalization) the university loses its position as *the* controller of knowledge, that is, "*bajo las condiciones sentadas por el capitalismo global, la universidad deja de ser el ámbito en el cual el conocimiento reflexiona sobre sí mismo*" (Castro-Gómez, 2007, p. 85)[3]. Actually, it becomes a corporation that works towards the globalization of capital.

As alternatives, Castro-Gómez (2007) proposes transdisciplinarity, which, rather than promoting exchange among disciplines while keeping their core intact, holds that "something can be equal to its contrary" (Castro-Gómez, 2007, p. 86, my translation) because opposites are complementary. In this sense, the Western exclusionary way of thinking can be replaced with an inclusive one. He also calls for a more rhizomatic university, in which students enroll in a network of programs and choose their own study paths. Professors, on the other hand, would be linked to different departments. Finally, he defends transculturality or the dialogue among diverse types of knowledge.

The modern/colonial imaginary permeates the relations among universities as well. Some examples are the rankings, which position institutions in hierarchies according to criteria the Global North defines, under the illusion of neutrality, and which favor its universities (Shahjahan; Ramirez; Andreotti, 2017), in addition to setting the tone for what institutions in the South 'should' do to 'move forward'. In response to globalization, internationalization is gaining force with little discussion on why/how to engage in such a process and the modern/colonial ideals which permeate it (Jordão; Martinez, 2021).

Given this modern/colonial imaginary, some groups have been discussing decolonial alternatives. Andreotti *et al.* (2015) mapped spaces of enunciation in response to coloniality in higher education, namely the 'soft-reform' space, the 'radical-reform' space and the 'beyond-reform' space. The first one seeks inclusion through individual or institutional efforts, as it sees that these instances have failed in finding ways to make access more equal, without changing the dominant system. The radical-reform space, in addition to recognizing inequality, acknowledges epistemological dominance and modern violence as systemic, which would require adjustments in the system. Therefore, it is "often characterized by a fragmentation in the analyses of oppression [...] and a strong normative stance focused on 'fixing' an aspect of the system [...], which ultimately leads to an expansion of the existing, modern system, rather than enabling alternatives to it" (Andreotti *et al.*, 2015, p. 27). In turn, the last one, the 'beyond-reform' space, recognizes ontological dominance and understands the modern system as unsustainable, which leads to three main responses: system walk out – aims to find alternatives to modernity; hacking – seeks one acts within the system to educate people away from it; or 'hospicing' – understands that, while useful, proposed solutions tend to reproduce modern/colonial grammar, which requires that we learn from the collapse of the system in a self-implicated way.

3 Autoethnography and decoloniality: my teaching experience within Languages without Borders

Autoethnography, according to Eriksson (2010), refers to the process of turning to ourselves and our practices in a given context. As the author claims, autoethnography allows

---

[3] "Under the conditions global capitalism establishes, the university is no longer the sphere in which knowledge reflects about itself" (Castro-Gómez, 2007, p. 85, my translation).

one to break out from the practice of analyzing the Other, as an alien – such as in traditional ethnography. In his words, "in autoethnography I study what I do, and the meaning I believe my doings and sayings have. [...] I have direct access to the experiences, feelings and reasoning that floats through my mind." (Eriksson, 2010, p. 93).

Considering the previous discussions on decoloniality, I chose autoethnography in this research because it allows me to locate the discussion, both geographically and bodily. I analyze my own experience as a teacher in LwB, specifically in a federal university in Sergipe, accessing my own reasoning. This is not to say that, by doing so, I am successfully escaping the traps of modernity/coloniality; actually, I am aware that, despite the attempts to act and think beyond the grammar of modernity/coloniality, my responses to it are conditioned by this grammar. In line with Andreotti *et. al.* (2015, p. 24), I am no stating that "the modern grammar is totalizing in the sense that it forestalls resistance, [...] [but] it affects nearly all realms of life for those inhabiting both its shine and its shadow." Therefore, experimenting with alternatives to learn from them and see where and how the modern/colonial grammar is reproduced is an important strategy that can potentially get us closer to thinking otherwise.

Here I engage in a process of autoethnography described as researcher-is-researched, which means I will focus on my own experience (Doloriert; Sambrook, 2009) as an English teacher within the above-mentioned context. According to Pardo (2019), this methodology can be especially valuable for teachers for offering a tool to self-critical-auto reflection that allows understanding of where our reasoning comes from (socially).

In this study, I got data from journals, teaching logs and documents (PowerPoint presentations, handouts etc.). I analyze three courses I developed in 2019, namely "Oral production: debates" (32h), "English language varieties" (48h), and "Oral production: academic communications" (32h). Before I move on to the analysis, some things should be mentioned about course choice. Courses offered in LwB are chosen from a national catalogue of options that were selected based on their alignment with LwB's goals, such as contributing to internationalization. In my case, the courses were more often the coordinators' choice, which they made based on their own criteria, like the demand from the academic community. However, even though the options from the catalogue had a determined general focus (e.g. strategies to understand oral texts), we, the teachers, were free to develop them, using or creating materials, choosing themes, topics to discuss etc. In weekly meetings, we would take our plans to discuss with other teachers and the coordinators and, if necessary, make some adjustments before developing the class/course with students. I should also add that all courses mentioned were offered to students in the upper-intermediate level (CEFR: B2)[4].

Given that, for each class, I would propose questions to guide students' reflections, I have elaborated frameworks which explicit the issue addressed in each class, as well as the proposed questions and the focus (a strategy, grammar etc.). In the following topic, I will address each course separately and later discuss intelligibility.

4 To the courses: a journey towards self-reflection in course planning

Oral production: debates (32h)

---

[4] Courses offered within LwB follow the levels of proficiency the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) defined.

This 32-hour course, 16 classes (2 hours each) was developed from February to April 2019. As the name suggests, its focus was on debating orally and, given the LwB's link to the internationalization of higher education, the academic environment was centered. Therefore, the planning process involved the selection of strategies students could use to engage in academic debates, the choice of themes to be debated - all of which linked to different knowledge areas to promote dialogues among them -, and questions to guide reflections related to the theme and language. Framework 1 shows the choices made for each class.

Framework 1 – Oral production: debates

	Issue	Proposed questions	Focus (given the general purpose)
Class 1	-	-	-
Class 2	The growing presence of AI in humans' daily lives	What are the factors involved in people's stance towards AI? What makes us humans? What differentiates us from AI?	Reported speech as an argumentative strategy
Class 3	The impact of memes in social practices	How have memes impacted how we communicate and relate with each other? Has it impacted everyone equally? What is the role of meaning negotiation?	Requesting and giving clarification; using reported speech in a debate
Class 4	Global warming and the impacts of plastic	What kind of relationship do we have with planet? What are the impacts of this relationship? What can we do to change that?	Debating
Class 5	Humans' eating habits (vegetarianism and veganism)	What is our relationship with animals? Where does it come from? What are the impacts of this relationship?	Debating
Class 6	Gender (in)equality	How are women and men portrayed in the media? What are the social differences related to men and women? How do they impact different spheres of life?	Use of adjectives (in relation to sex); using personal stories to support arguments
Class 7	The notion of beauty	What makes us believe something/someone is beautiful? Where do the notions of beauty come from?	Images (their role in beauty standards and meaning-making processes)
Class 8	(The lack of) security	How do different countries deal with security? How are their actions related to their context, considering social issues?	Using statistics
Class 9	Art	What gets to be considered art? Who decides that? Whose art is acknowledged?	Debating
Class 10	Culture	What is the definition of culture? Who has defined (or defines) what culture is?	

		What causes different cultures to get in conflict?	Debating
Class 11	Stereotypes	How are stereotypes created? Who creates them? What are the impacts of stereotypes?	Rhetorical devices (accumulation and anaphora)
Class 12	Political speeches	What is the role of speeches in the political sphere? How are speeches usually used in this context?	Contrast (comparison, opposites); puzzles and questions; lists of three (different, identical, phrases).
Class 13	Fake news	What are the impacts of fake news in elections? And in our daily lives? How does fake news spread?	Debating
Class 14	Surveillance, power and control	How is technology related to surveillance? In which situations of our life does surveillance happen? Who has access to data? Who benefits from it? What are the impacts of surveillance?	Review
Class 15	-	-	Evaluation
Class 16	-	-	Feedback session

Source: my elaboration

The first class in this course (and in the following ones) is a moment of getting to know the teacher, each other, and the course itself. Class 2, on the other hand, focused on using reported speech as an argumentative strategy to debate Artificial Intelligence and what makes us humans. Here the discussion addressed *being* a human and the access to things like cutting-edge technology. Therefore, although the discussion dealt with what being human means (as opposed to a technological device) and how this is related to access, the coloniality of being – the *ego conquiro* before the *ego cogito* - was not approached. Similarly, the third class addresses access and inequality, but it focuses on differences and the role of meaning negotiation. In this case, one point is important, difference is considered inevitable and part of us. So, rather than being denied under the modern/colonial logic of totality, it was approached as part of our relationships. Considering that, students were invited to think about the role of meaning negotiation.

In classes 4 and 5, I decided to address our relationship with nature and animals (other-than-human beings). My idea here was to question the centrality of human beings, as greater than nature, and the tendency of seeing nature as a source of resources to be explored in favor of the capitalist market (Cajigas-Rotundo, 2007).

The sixth class is about gender (in)equality; however, only the social roles of men and women were approached, that is, other genders could have been part of the conversation. However, in the face of the dept and vastness of the theme, I selected a small part of the discussion – a pattern I followed in all of the classes and which is related to intelligibility and to my attempt to promote self-reflexivity, as I will discuss further in this paper. In addition to that, I decided to address story telling as an argumentative resource, so students could see the possibility of embodying the debate instead of trying to push their subjectivity away – as per the modern/colonial imaginary.

The seventh class questions the notion of beauty, exploring biological and social explanations. Here the reflections revolve around where these accounts come from, which logic they follow, and who benefits from it. I consider the relation between the notion of beauty and coloniality, mostly the production of a definition of beauty that is highly ground on the racial difference (with Whites being privileged). The class also addresses images as texts to be read and problematized, linked to studies of multimodality. However, here I reproduced the idea of humans as central, specifically in using/creating multimodal texts to serve their purposes. Additionally, I worked with modes from the perspective that they are separated from the whole (dividing reality in small parts to rationally comprehend it), in spite of acknowledging that the combined modes lead to a different meaning-making process than they do individually. As Canagarajah (2018, p. 5) explains, "the label "multimodality" connotes that other semiotic resources are organized into "modes" with their own structures and meanings. Furthermore, these studies treat human agents as having the power to deploy semiotic resources for their purposes." In other words, humans from their position as central shape/change/create things to achieve a certain result. Therefore, I reproduced the modern/colonial grammar in diving reality in parts (a logic found in Descartes) and in centering human beings. Regarding the latter, I also note a conflict: in the same course I seek to question the ego-politics in relation to nature (Classes 4 and 5), but in this class I reinforce it.

Class 8, in turn, revolves around the relation of security and social issues, which are also linked to the racial difference. In this class, I also thought about analyzing the contexts of different countries because the inequality (North-South and within each group) could be more evident to students.

Classes 9, 10, and 11 address how power is related to art, culture and stereotypes, questioning who is in the position of deciding and imposing and who is mostly affected. The idea of power, however, did not follow the logic of a group in power and one without it, rather, it explored the unequal distribution of power, from a Foucauldian perspective. Therefore, power is not explicitly linked to coloniality. Similarly, class 14 focuses on the use of technology for surveillance purposes in attempts to maintain power positions.

Classes 12 and 13 deal with the use of speeches and fake news in political elections and their impacts. In the case of the latter, the effects on daily life were also discussed. Both cases work from a perspective of identification, that is, how our beliefs interfere in the process of 'being persuaded' and/or believing in fake news.

Finally, the evaluation required pupils to develop a speech to present orally. They could choose any theme they wanted but needed to mobilize some of the strategies discussed. It was a moment for them to consider their own readings of a theme and present it to the class, who would engage in debating the information.

In general, when dealing with the strategies I sought an inductive approach, that is, having students analyze and discuss language in use to get to the strategy; however, after that, I would explain it deductively. I also see the structure of being exposed to the strategy to practice it afterwards. Therefore, there is an attempt to hold on to the false stability promised in the modern/colonial discourse. In spite of seeking to bring the unknown and uncomfortable instability and to let go of the structures, I still work with relatively fixed content – for instance, in the first class, students saw how the grammar topic works (reported speech) and later how to use it in debates (learn the rules and only then use). Moreover, even though there was no linear planning in relation to the organization of topics, the linearity appears within the classes, that is, first pupils would learn the rules and only then use them to debate. This did not happen in every class, but it was frequent. Besides being linked to the attempt to hold on to

modern/colonial promises (of stability and rationality), it also has to do with the course structure within LwB. In other words, there were structures to which I had to submit, given the functioning of the program, so my option was to transgress, given what I considered possible – and that ability to see what is (not) possible is also conditioned by modern/colonial thinking.

English language varieties (48h)

This course was developed from May to July 2019. Given its 48-hour duration, it had 24 2-hour classes. Here I explored some English language varieties which I selected mostly considering the available resources online and the interactions with students, who would suggest a variety for the following class, for instance. I also had in mind that I wanted to include the ones often not considered and marginalized.

I highlight the resources available online because they are related to coloniality. As I briefly discussed in a previous section, there is the modern separation of body and place from knowledge and language. One of the results is what Sousa Santos (2010) calls *localismo globalizado* [localism globalized], that is, the local (like a prestigious variety of English) is made global. The position of globalizing local values, knowledge and varieties of a language is often occupied by countries in the Global North – frequently under the pretense of universality and neutrality. The countries in the Global South are left with the choice and/or adaptation to the local globalized in a process which Sousa Santos (2010) entitles *globalismo localizado* [globalism localized]. In this sense, those who produce local globalism get to dictate the terms of the conversation, to exclude and include. This is reflected in available resources to teach English. When I was looking for materials or texts in general (videos, audios, written texts etc.) in different varieties, there were plenty of resources related to the so-called American English and the British English. In the case of the United Kingdom (UK), it was also easy to find texts (in various modes) in/about varieties from this part of the world. As I tried to move away from countries in the Global North, finding resources became more and more difficult, and written texts would often analyze English learning in the country – frequently saying how 'bad' it was (the case of Brazil, for instance).

The availability of resources, therefore, affected the choice of which varieties would be in the course. For instance, there is one class for Brazil but four to the UK. I was aware that I could reinforce the privileged position of certain varieties; however, given that I needed to be able to develop 24 2-hour classes, I decided to work with the varieties and focus, in each class, on problematizing and questioning issues related to them. In other words, I added varieties in the course not from a 'neutral' perspective based on learning about them; rather, I focused on problematizations and reflections concerning them. That was my of transgressing and acting within a structure which is designed to reinforce its own existence.

Framework 2 shows the main information of the classes in this course, including which questions guided the reflections.

Framework 2 - English language varieties

	Issue	Proposed questions	Focus
Class 1	-	-	-
Class 2	The impact of internet in English use	How has the internet impacted English use? How can tensions be created/intensified in this context?	English online
Class 3	The impact of memes in English use online and in person	How have memes impacted English use both online and in person? How can tensions be created/intensified in this context?	Memes
Class 4	Intelligibility	How do you make sense of what you hear/see/sense? What are the strategies you use to read given information in a different language variety?	Mancunian (UK)
Class 5	Variety and social inequality	What is the relation between a variety and social position? Whose variety is usually valued? Whose is not?	Cockney (UK)
Class 6	Idiomatic expressions and culture	How are idiomatic expressions related to culture?	Idiomatic expressions
Class 7	English learning in Brazil	How is English present in Brazil, considering historical aspects? Who has access to English classes? And who does not? What are the impacts of the socioeconomic conjuncture in English learning? How do different people (from different countries) deal with the accents from Brazilian people? And how do we?	Brazilian English
Class 8	Slangs and social position	What groups use slangs? How can slangs emerge? How is social reaction to slangs related to social position?	Slangs
Class 9	Variety and difference	How is one's language variety related to a sense of belonging? How are the tensions between an 'I' and an 'Other' built?	Mexican and Colombian English
Class 10	Socioeconomic matters and historical changes	How have Englishes changed over time? How are the changes related to socioeconomic matters?	English from a historical perspective
Class 11	English in a globalized world	How are varieties related to power? How do conflicts in communication arise?	Review
Class 12	Power and standardization	What is it that makes a variety standard in relation to others?	Evaluation
Class 13	Diversity in Canada	How does the country deal with the variety of cultures and linguistic varieties? What are the historical factors related to English in the country?	Canadian English
Class 14	Social inequality and capitalism	How collective and individual are dealt with within the system and how is it related to inequality? How did English come to be so expressive in the US?	US English (Standard)

		Why is 'American English' so spread?	
Class 15	Racism and the devaluation of varieties	Why do people consider AAE inarticulate? Where does this reading come from? How are power and race related to the decision of what is the 'proper' way to speak/write?	African-American English (AAE)
Class 16	Native speakerism	What does "speak like a native speaker' mean? Who is this native speaker?	Australian English
Class 17	Colonialism and linguistic prejudice	How is colonialism related to language? What are the causes and consequences of linguistic prejudice?	Indian English
Class 18	The limitations of proficiency exams and its impacts on English teaching	What kind of variety do proficiency exams evaluate? Who benefits from that? Who does not? How does the use of these tests as proof of proficiency impact English teaching and learning?	Chinese English
Class 19	Intelligibility	How to negotiate meaning in communication?	Scottish English (UK)
Class 20	Power and standardization	What English varieties are more widely taught? How is that related to power?	South African English
Class 21	Varieties within a country	What are the tensions among varieties inside a country? How does one deal with them?	Yorkshire (UK)
Class 22	Language survival	What leads to language 'extinction'? What can be done to protect threaten languages?	Review
Class 23	-	-	Evaluation
Class 24	-	-	Feedback session

Source: my elaboration

Class 1, just like in the previous course, was reserved as a get to know moment. The work with varieties started in the second class. I began, in the second and third classes, with discussions related to the internet, especially the impacts on how we communicate with each other and make sense of the world. In both classes, reflections revolved around questioning of the idea of language as a structure, a set of prescriptive rules to be followed and how it is linked to social practices, specifically in online environments.

The fourth class, in turn, focuses on a variety from the UK, Mancunian. Given its sounds and particular vocabulary, I decided to address intelligibility, more specifically, I wanted students to question how they make sense of the world and deal with different varieties.

Class 5 explores the connections between social inequality and varieties, considering that the ones associated with groups in lower social positions are often marginalized. In this class, I approached this idea in relation to the history of Cockney, variety associated with the working class. Here, the work could have raised reflections as to coloniality's role in determining social positions, something which did not happen.

Classes 6 and 8 attempt to raise awareness to location (bodily and geographically), given that languages are not detached disembodied tools (Jordão; Martinez, 2021), focusing on the relation between idiomatic expressions and culture, slangs and social position, respectively. By acknowledging that, we need to think of difference. That's the aim of the ninth class, which deals with the notion that, when using language, we meet the Other, and our encounter with this Other is permeated with conflict and complexity. Colonial reasoning marks this relation in terms of hierarchization and dichotomy, with the denial of the Other who is outside the totality of modern civilization. In this sense, not considering and questioning this colonial relation with the Other can reinforce it (Martinez, 2017). Specifically, in this class, I took the relations between US citizens and Latinos as a starting point of the discussion.

Regarding the seventh class, considering that lots of information I found talked about English teaching and learning in Brazil as inefficient and stereotyped language learners, I decided to work on historical matters in relation to the presence of the language in the country, as well as on how the socioeconomic scenario can be connected to language education. In this class, I also had students discussing some of the stereotypes I found, so we could reflect on how we see ourselves as English speakers and how the world sees us, in a process of self-reflection that takes into account where our readings come from.

Class 10, on the other hand, goes back to the reflections proposed in classes 2 and 3; however, linguistic changes were approached considering both history and socioeconomic matters. In this case, colonialism was explored, with discussions on the formation of empires and the violent domination of the so-called colonies, as well as the dynamics of which groups (and which languages and varieties) would occupy the 'superior' and 'inferior' positions, considering socioeconomic factors which, in turn, are related to the idea of race – in what Garcés (2007) calls a *matriz colonial de valoración* [colonial matrix of evaluation]. Class 11 moves on with the discussion and addresses power relations in the globalized world – which, as per Escobar (2007), is based on modern/colonial thinking, in addition to being Eurocentered. In this context, varieties are hierarchized in terms of power relations. This leads to Class 12, which focuses on standardization and marginalization, exploring how the colonial matrix of evaluation praises Western knowledges and languages (Garcés, 2007). This class was reserved to an evaluation, which I understand as a moment to continue (self)reflecting, as part of the process, rather than a means to get numerical results.

Class 13 considers Canada, given the variety of groups of citizens, to discuss how the country officially deals with that, in terms of policies, official discourses, while linking the particularities of the country to historical events. Although I did not mention terms such as interculturality, multiculturalism, transculturality (considering eligibility), I sought to promote discussions around them; for instance, how is the Other seen and treated? What are the implications of such images and treatments?

The following classes refer to the US. In class 14, the link among power (to spread a language variety), social inequality, and capitalism was explored, considering the hegemonic position of the country. Class 15, in turn, centers racism and what race has to do with the decision of which varieties are considered 'proper' and which are not, for the modern/colonial division of superior and inferior is based on race, as Quijano (2000) explains.

Class 16 was planned around the deconstruction of nativespeakerism, that is, the idea of the native speaker of a language as model to be achieved – both for learners and teachers who are non-native speakers (Holliday, 2005). I see this idea as grounded on the dichotomized and hierarchical reasoning of modernity (native vs non-native, with first as the 'more evolved model

to be followed). In this class, I ask who this English native speaker is, so as to again localize varieties which are often placed as disembodied and neutral.

In class 17, I return to colonialism. This time, focusing on India. Here, the enduring impacts of colonialism, specifically regarding language, is addressed and related to prejudice, given the totalitarian relation to the Other, as 'wrong', 'inadequate', 'uncivilized'.

The next class departs from the phenomenon taking place in China (which also happens in other countries) of teaching *for* proficiency exams to problematize these tests – which are frequently based on the native ideal and disregard varieties.

Class 19, like class 4, works with intelligibility and meaning negotiation, considering that everyone involved in a conversation construct different meanings, which can lead to conflict and requires negotiation (Jordão, 2007). This aspect becomes more evident in dialogues that include speakers of different varieties, given that, as social constructions, they are linked to social practices and cultural matters – even though it also happens within the same variety. Although throughout the course the notion of many varieties within a country was discussed, in Class 21 this is the focus. More specifically, the tensions among them, given the dominant modern/colonial idea of a totality "that negates, exclude, occlude the difference and the possibilities of other totalities" (Mignolo, 2007, p. 451).

Classes 20 and 22 deal with power and the maintenance or the erasure of varieties and languages. As per Garcés (2007), this process illustrates linguistic coloniality, which

> *muestra una doble cara: por un lado, la modernidad subalternizó determinadas lenguas en favor de otras, pero, por otro lado, además, colonizó la palabra de los hablantes de dichas lenguas. Es decir, no sólo se subalternizaron determinadas lenguas, sino también la propia palabra y el decir de los hablantes colonizados* (Garcés, 2007, p. 227).[5]

In this sense, not only are languages placed in a hierarchy, but the words of speakers – with words said in a language being more valued then the ones uttered in others. In the case of the 22nd class, after seeking to have students identifying this issue, the idea is to come up with solutions to the extinction of some languages. This is a pattern I follow in other classes: noticing a problem and thinking about how to solve it. In the words of Stein (2019, p. 1780),

> while decolonial [...] critiques and practices are understood to be useful for recognizing enduring colonial patterns, asking difficult questions, and gesturing toward other possibilities, to seek within these theories a prescriptive (re)solution would be to route them back into the same set of colonial entitlements that they challenge.

This is not to say that we should not do a thing about these problems, but that the modern/colonial grammar conditions our responses, so we will reproduce its logic very often, which means that we need to hold ourselves accountable and experiment – so we can analyze in

---

[5] It "shows a double face: on the one hand, modernity has subordinated certain languages in favor of others, but, on the other, it has colonized the word of the speakers of such languages as well. That is, not only has it subordinated some languages, but also the word itself and the say of colonized speakers" (Garcés, 2007, p. 227, my translation).

which moments we reinforce or delink from modernity/coloniality.

Finally, class 24 refers to the evaluation, followed by a feedback session (class 25). As a means to continue reflecting on English language varieties, pupils should do research on a different variety, that is, one that we did not discuss in one of the classes, and present to other students so we could discuss together.

Oral production: academic communications (32h)

This is a 32-hour course (with 16 2-hour classes), which was developed between September and December 2019. Again, the focus is on speaking, specifically in academic communications. Therefore, my planning was bound to this focal point, so I considered first the general parts of an academic communication (introduction, body, and development), which follow the pattern of linearity of thought. Then I thought of specific abilities useful to develop such parts (such as developing an argument, explaining ideas, using connectors etc.). After that, there was an evaluation, which consisted on having students write a short presentation on a topic they were studying/researching, organizing it under the linearity introduction – body – development. Previsibility, linearity, and order are some of the modern ideals used to justify colonial processes. Letting go of these promises, however, is not easy, for it means the end of the world as we know it, so it is uncomfortable, conflictive, and complex (Jordão; Martinez, 2021; Stein; Silva, 2020; Stein et al., 2022). In addition to that, when it comes to English language teaching, there is usually a structure meant to keep previsibility, linearity, and order. As I mentioned before in this paper, the program of which I was a teacher had its own 'rules' and goals. The courses are developed in line with a catalogue, so, even though I was free to plan the course, there were still 'rules' and 'goals' I needed to follow. This means that I still had to 'prepare' students for oral academic communications in this course, sticking to linearity at some levels. Therefore, two main aspects led me to seek previsibility, linearity, and order: the external structures and my own constraints, contradictions, and anxieties. In addition to that, there was the matter of intelligibility, which I will discuss later in this paper.

In the second part of the course, I was able to let go a little bit more of linearity in relation to the focuses of each class. One thing I see regarding this matter is that the course I previously analyzed (English language varieties) allowed me to follow a more rhizomatic approach, given that classes were independent, and reflections did not follow a linear reasoning (I mean in terms of order). I went back and forth and came back to certain topics to discuss them from a different point of view. This is more difficult in more narrowed courses such as this one because it defines one specific ability (speaking), one situation/genre (academic communications), one context (academic), which ties me to conventions and 'rules'. The proposed reflections hence become my way of questioning this 'rules' and transgressing them, considering my internal and external limitations.

Framework 3 shows the issues, questions for reflections and focuses of each class. I move on to further discuss them right after the framework.

Framework 3 - Oral production: academic communications

	Issue	Proposed questions	Focus
Class 1	-	-	-
Class 2	Relations between architecture and historical and geopolitical matters	How is architecture related to historical and geopolitical matters?	Introducing talks/ communications
Class 3	Digital technology, inequality and communication	How is digital technology affecting how we interact and construct meaning? What are possible impacts of the (lack of) access to digital technology?	Developing arguments
Class 4	Is astrology valid? On the validity of knowledge	What makes knowledge "valid"? Who decides that? On what grounds?	Indirect speech
Class 5	The impacts of pesticides use	How do pesticides affect the food we eat? How can they impact the environment? What are possible outcomes to this use in large scales?	Explaining (body of academic presentations)
Class 6	The impacts of choosing/using sources of energy	What are the motives to using certain sources of energy? How do these choices impact the environment?	Connectors
Class 7	Images as texts to be read and problematized	How do the choices related to taking and editing (angle, colors etc.) images position the readers? How can images reproduce prejudice? How to 'read against' them?	Concluding
Class 8	The barriers for expressing one's own identity	How can we express our identities? Can everyone express themselves freely in every context? Why (not)? Where does self-expression and social rules collide?	Asking questions (to engage in academic discussions)
Class 9	Art and westernization	What is art? Who gets to decide that? What pieces are usually considered art? What is not? Who are those considered artists? Who is not? How free are artists to express their viewpoints? Why?	Engaging in academic debates with conflicting ideas
Class 10	Capitalism, productivity, and motivation	How did productivity come to be so required in society? Where does the pressure to be productive come from? Who benefits from it? Who does not? How is motivation dealt with in a world where productivity is required?	Review
Class 11	-	-	Evaluation
Class 12	Music: scientific fact or opinion?	What is the difference between a scientific fact and an opinion? Can they be separated?	Discussing the scientific method and the positivist ideals

Class 13	Museums and the Other	What kind of content can be found in museums? Where does it come from? How is it acquired? How do we feel about the content in the museum? How do we feel about it outside of the museum? How do we feel about who produced it?	Using future forms to organize an academic communication
Class 14	(Lack of) access to healthcare	How do healthcare systems work in different countries? How is it related to the countries' context? Who benefits from it? Who does not? Who is interested in keeping them the way they are?	Getting ready for academic presentations
Class 15	-	-	Presentations and discussion (+ feedback)
Class 16	-	-	Presentations and discussion (+ feedback)

Source: my elaboration

Class 1, once again, was a get-to-know moment. The second class, on the other hand, addresses architecture and geopolitical and historical issues, such as social inequality, the position of trying to explain (in line with modern/colonial thinking) architecture from non-Western peoples – which can lead to questioning their ability to undertake such constructions, often considered mysteries for not following modern thinking.

The third class approaches a topic already discussed in a previous course: digital technology, our access to it, and how it affects our meaning-making processes. Again, in this class, the reflection on access was not explicitly linked to coloniality (with race, for instance). This might lead to the reinforcement of a 'separation' in only social classes – as in Marx's work, in which one's position is seen in terms of class and which maintains a universalism that "*surge desde una localización particular, en este caso el proletariado, [y] no problematiza el hecho de que dicho sujeto sea europeo, masculino, heterosexual, blanco, judeo-cristiano, etc*"[6] (Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 69). I did not want to put this discussion as only a social matter, but, by not exploring the links with colonial categories, I might have reinforced this understanding.

Class 4, in turn, focuses on knowledge validity, more specifically who decides what is (not) valid knowledge and how the decision is made. Here the idea is to show that knowledge is always localized: a body placed geographically produces it. By discussing and questioning the 'rules' of validity, it is also possible to denaturalize them.

Classes 5 and 6 deal with the 'biocolonialidad del poder' [biocoloniality of power], which Cajigas-Rotundo (2007) uses to refer to the vision of nature as a limitless source of resources to feed the capitalist system, increasing levels of consumption. This leads to a crisis, with the degradation of ecological systems. In response, corporative elites have been presenting 'green technologies', based on the idea that it is possible to keep levels of consumption (and therefore natural exploration) with less environmental destruction. In class 5, the focus in the increasing use of pesticides in Brazil while class 6 works with renewable sources of energy.

---

[6] "emerges from a particular location, in this case, the proletariat, [and] does not problematize the fact that the subject is European, male, straight, White, Judeo-Christian etc." (Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 69, my translation).

Although the way humans face nature is problematized, again I seem to seek for solutions in both classes, wanting students to think on how to act within the system, which can end up reinforcing what I am criticizing (Stein, 2019).

In class 7, I go back to working with images, like I do in the seventh class of the course 'Oral production: debates.' Just like before, humans are centralized, put as those who can use semiotic resources for their own purposes, which means that again I reproduced the modern/colonial grammar notion of human centrality. This is a very conflicting part for me: how can focus on agency and, at the same time, question human centrality? I certainly do not have an answer for this question, but I see it as one issue to be further explored.

Class 8, in turn, works with the coloniality of being (Maldonado-Torres, 2007), that is, on how the modern/colonial violates some identities/existences. Meanwhile, class 9 proposes a discussion on art and westernization or the Western power position of deciding what is art and who can be considered an artist. Freedom to express viewpoints was also addressed in this class.

Class 10 focuses on the capitalist notion of productivity – that causes feelings such as guilt when we cannot be productive for a while –, as well as who does (not) benefit from this notion. Shahjahana (2015, p. 490) talks about decolonizing time, which "derives from a Judaeo–Christian notion of time as linear, constant, and irreversible" and, under Western logic, can be wasted, after all 'time is money.' As Mignolo (2011) explains, time has been used in modern/colonial thinking to stablish a chronology of thinking, so if one is not following this notion that is tied to the idea of progress it means that one is 'behind', in the past. This leads us to keep trying to catch up with the 'developed' (the West). In this class, the idea is to question this notion. I wonder, however, how I could have actually tried to decolonize time in this class, maybe taking a few minutes to do 'nothing', as Shahjahana (2015) suggests, given that our routines (as teachers, researchers, students) are often rushed, like we need more time to produce more, like we (teachers) need longer classes to be able to teach the entirety of content required by other instances (such as the state secretariat of education). In other words, rather than only problematizing the notion, I could have tried to break it a little bit in class.

Class 12, in turn, addresses the difference between an opinion and a scientific fact, focusing on the positivist notion that valid knowledge is 'objective', for the scientist's subjectivity is not to be part of the study, so as to achieve the modern/colonial ideals of true and timeless knowledge from *el punto cero* [the zero point]. The class provoked students to question this 'purity' of scientific knowledge, and it also dealt with negacionism (especially due to current political events occurring that year, 2019). The reflections were meant to emphasize grey areas of the discussion, relativizing the black and white (dualistic) approach of either denying scientific knowledge completely or believing it is above any questioning. In line with Sousa Santos (2007), the idea is to explore diversity within science and seek alternatives. Decoloniality is not the exclusion of Western knowledge; rather, it stands for pluri-versality, with no knowledge imposition or placement as superior and with the acknowledgment that knowledge is always local.

Class 13 discusses how museums can reinforce the idea of the Other as eccentric, as an object to be studied by the 'evolved' subjects who can achieve 'real' knowledge from the zero point. The reflections focus on problematizing this kind of relationship with otherness, having museums as an example that illustrates it. Meanwhile, in an attempt of denaturalization, class 14 proposes questions on (lack of) access to healthcare, highlighting its link to neoliberalism and the vision of the Other as a non-being (Maldonado Torres, 2007) who would thus not be entitled to basic human rights such as healthcare.

Finally, classes 15 and 16 were dedicated to presentations and subsequent discussions. This last evaluation simulated a space for academic communications in which students would present something they were studying (possibly the same content of the first evaluation) and everyone would discuss it afterwards. The idea was to stablish a dialogue among disciplines, given the variety of undergraduate and graduate students, as well as of university staff, so as to get close to Castro-Gómez's (2007) notion of transdisciplinarity.

5 Intelligibility and self-reflexivity: attempts and complexities

In all three courses I analyzed above, the issue of intelligibility has affected my choices with regard to themes and questions proposed. Concerning this topic, Maldonado-Torres (2004) explains that epistemic blindness or blindness to damnation is part of (post)modernity, covering our eyes when it comes to other ways of thinking and to the colonial side of modernity. This means we often cannot think and be outside modern/colonial grammar. Andreotti (2016) claims that epistemic blindness sets the parameters of intelligibility, that is, of what one is able to comprehend and imagine. There are, in this case, educational implications, considering that "if the educational gap is not one of individual ignorance, but of a socially *sanctioned* ignorance, educational approaches that simply impart the knowledge that is foreclosed will likely be ineffective and create resistance" (Andreotti, 2016, p. 107, her highlights). This means that taking discussions on the dark side of modernity to classes is a complex and difficult task because implicates students in the process (which is inherently violent) and can confront (and deconstruct) lifetime beliefs that served as a ground sustaining decisions, values, actions, ways of reading the world etc. Such discomfort and uncertainty are frequently met with resistance, which requires that we (re)think about how to have this conversation that I believe to be necessary.

There are different levels of openness and willingness to engage in this discussion. In each course I developed within LwB, I had students from diverse areas who occupied varying positions in the university (professors, administrative, under and graduate students), which implies that I faced the challenge of making (or at least trying to) the dialogue intelligible for everyone. This led me to choose topics I thought pupils would be more open to face and also to place reflections at the level of perceiving the issues, of 'uncovering their eyes'. In the process, I would not state the problem, I sought to have them finding out on their own by analyzing examples from daily life, which is why I have worked with questions. This is a strategy I found to avoid confrontations of "truths" (the one I present vs. the one they believe in), given that dichotomies are part of modern/colonial grammar, and incite reflections on their own ideas.

I also notice the complexities of choosing which questions to ask, which themes to discuss because my choices are linked to what *I* consider intelligible. Even though I take into consideration what happens in class and what students say to make such decisions, my own understandings play a major role. Take, for instance, the repetition of themes in different courses (like art, beauty, digital literacies). This illustrates that choices are also informed by what I am capable of discussing and analyzing (to shine light on the colonial side, which is often made invisible) in diverse areas of knowledge. The process of making these decisions is always conflicting to me and makes me think of my own understandings.

I also need to consider how a got to a certain idea on the theme (e.g. how did I get to the notion of art as westernized?) because the impulse is to present the 'conclusion' itself in class, when I actually want to ask questions. This reflection helps me understanding why I read

something the way I did, which, in turn, guides me in thinking about which questions I asked myself. The elaboration of questions is thus highly informed by my own process of reflection, but it involves a constant dialogue with students, which requires negotiation. Sometimes, the questions I plan to ask are not intelligible at all, so, in the discussion, I need to think about more interrogations (and resist my urge to share *my* conclusions).

Moreover, considering intelligibility, I had to maintain a certain level of linearity, so I would not shock pupils and make classes confusing. Of course, keeping linearity has to do with how I read as well. I have been taught mostly in a linear way, the exercise of more rhizomatic approaches is thus also conflicting.

6 Further considerations

In this autoethnographic paper, I analyzed my own process of course elaboration within LwB, focusing on how I promoted critical thinking. The three English courses were developed during 2019, namely 'Oral production: debates' (32 hours long), English language varieties (48 hours long), and 'Oral production: academic communications' (32 hours long).

The (self)analysis has highlighted in which moments I delink and in which I reproduce modern/colonial thinking, either by reinforcing one of its aspects (like human centrality) or by not exploring colonial issues (like when I address social classes without discussing they grounded on coloniality). Moreover, I notice the impulse of keeping linearity and structure, even if minimally. I also seem to sometimes seek for solutions to problems proposed, which can lead me to reproduce what I critique, given that modern grammar conditions our responses and attempts to think and act otherwise. This is why I believe that self-implicatory critique is very important in the process of gesturing towards alternatives to modernity/coloniality. Perceiving the patterns I follow in course planning can inform future decisions and efforts to teach English otherwise. I am aware, however, that there are no guarantees and that conflict is part of the process.

In addition to my own internal conflicts (related to trying to break away from modern/colonial thinking and its promises), there were also external barriers of structures meant to keep modernity. Transgressing from within the system was a way to try to 'hack it'; the issue, however, is that very often it is hard to tell if I am hacking the system or being hacked by it (Andreotti *et al.*, 2015).

I also reflect on intelligibility, which influenced my decisions in relation to themes and questions for reflections. My own understanding what students would be more open to understand played an important role in this case, so I constantly questioned my own readings and beliefs concerning intelligibility. Nonetheless, I comprehend that this is a dialogical process permeated with differences (and conflicts). Therefore, negotiation, other than the erasure of these differences, is key.

References

Andreotti, V. O. de. *et al.* Mapping interpretations of decolonization in the context of higher education. *Decolonization*: Indigeneity, Education & Society, [*S.l.*], v. 4, n. 1, p. 21-40, 2015.

Andreotti, V. O. de. The educational challenges of imagining the world differently. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, [*S.l.*], v. 37, n. 1, p. 101-112, 2016.

Associação Nacional dos Dirigentes das Instituições Federais de Ensino Superior. Resolução do Conselho Pleno da Andifes nº1/2019, de 12 de novembro de 2019. Cria na estrutura da associação nacional dos dirigentes das instituições federais de ensino superior (ANDIFES), a da rede ANDIFES nacional de especialistas em língua estrangeira – Idiomas sem Fronteiras, denominada Rede ANDIFES IsF. Brasília, DF, 2019.

Bernardino-Costa, J.; Grosfoguel, R. Decolonialidade e perspectiva negra. *Revista Sociedade e Estado*, v. 31, n. 1, p. 15-24, 2016.

Brasil. Ministério da Educação. Decreto nº 7.642, de 13 de dezembro 2011. Programa Ciência sem Fronteiras. *Diário Oficial da União*: seção 1: Poder Executivo, Brasília, p. 7, 14 dez. 2011. Disponível em: http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_Ato2011-2014/2011/Decreto/D7642.htm. Acesso em: 28 jul. 2020.

Brasil. Ministério da Educação. Secretaria da Educação Superior. Portaria nº 1.466, de 18 de dezembro de 2012. Institui o Programa Inglês sem Fronteiras. *Diário Oficial da União*: seção 1: Poder Executivo, Brasília, p. 28-29, 19 dez. 2012. Disponível em: http://isf.mec.gov.br/images/pdf/portaria_normativa_1466_2012.pdf. Acesso em: 03 nov. 2019.

Brasil. Ministério da Educação. Secretaria da Educação Superior. Portaria nº 973, de 14 de novembro 2014. Institui o Programa Idiomas sem Fronteiras e dá outras Providências. *Diário Oficial da União*: seção 1: Poder Executivo, Brasília, p. 11-12, 17 nov. 2014. Disponível em: http://isf.mec.gov.br/ingles/images/pdf/novembro/Portaria_973_Idiomas_sem_Fronteiras.pdf . Acesso em: 03 nov. 2021.

Brasil. Ministério da Educação. Portaria n° 30, de 26 de janeiro de 2016. Amplia o Programa Idiomas sem Fronteiras. *Diário Oficial da União*: seção 1: Poder Executivo, Brasília, p. 18-19, 28 jan. 2016. Disponível em: http://isf.mec.gov.br/images/2016/janeiro/Portaria_n_30_de_26_de_janeiro_de_2016_DOU. pdf. Acesso em: 19 mai. 2021.

Cajigas-Rotundo, J. C. La biocolonialidad del poder: Amazonía, biodiversidad y ecocapitalismo. In: Castro-Gómez, S.; Grosfoguel, R. (eds.). *El giro decolonial*: reflexiones para una diversidad epistémica más allá del capitalismo global. Bogotá: Siglo del Hombre Editores, 2007. p. 169-193.

Canagarajah, S. Materializing 'Competence': Perspectives From International STEM Scholars. *The Modern Language Journal*, [*S.l.*], v. 102, n. 2, p. 1-24, 2018.

Castro-Gómez, S. Decolonizar la universidad: la hybris del punto cero y el diálogo de saberes. In: Castro-Gómez, S.; Grosfoguel, R. (eds.). *El giro decolonial*: reflexiones para una diversidad epistémica más allá del capitalismo global. Bogotá: Siglo del Hombre Editores, 2007. p. 63-77.

De Wit, H. *Trends, issues and challenges in internationalisation of Higher Education*. Amsterdam: Centre for Applied Research on Economics & Management, 2011.

Doloriert, C.; Sambrook, S. Ethical confessions of the "I" of autoethnography: the student's dilemma". *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management*: an International Journal, [*S.l.*], v. 4, n. 1, p. 27-459, 2009.

Eriksson, T. Being native: distance, closeness and doing auto/self-ethnography. *ArtMonitor*, [*S.l.*], n. 8, p. 91-100, 2010.

Escobar, A. *Worlds and knowledges otherwise*: The Latin American modernity/coloniality research program. Cultural Studies, [*S.l.*], v. 21, n. 2-3, p. 179-210, 2007.

Fabricius, A. H.; Mortensen, J.; Haberland, H. The lure of internationalization: paradoxical discourses of transnational student mobility, linguistic diversity and cross-cultural exchange. *Higher Education*, [*S.l.*], v. 73, n. 4, p. 577-595, 2016.

Grosfoguel, R. Descolonizando los universalismos occidentales: el pluri-versalismo transmoderno decolonial desde aimé césaire hasta los zapatistas. In: Castro-Gómez, S.; Grosfoguel, R. (eds.). *El giro decolonial*: reflexiones para una diversidad epistémica más allá del capitalismo global. Bogotá: Siglo del Hombre Editores, 2007. p. 63-77.

Holliday, A. R. *The Struggle to Teach English as an International Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Jordão, C. M. O que todos sabem.... ou não: letramento crítico e questionamento conceitual. *Revista Crop*, p. 21-46, 2007.

Jordão, C. M.; Martinez, J. Z. Wines, Bottles, Crises: A Decolonial Perspective on Brazilian Higher Education. *Rev. Bras. Linguist. Apl.*, Belo Horizonte, v. 21, n. 2, p. 577-604, apr. 2021.

Knight, J. *A time of turbulence and transformation for internationalization*. Ottawa: Canadian Bureau for International Education, 1999

Maldonado-Torres, N. The topology of being and the geopolitics of knowledge: modernity, empire, coloniality. *City*, [*S.l.*], v. 8, n. 1, p. 29-56, 2004.

Maldonado-Torres, N. On the coloniality of being: Contributions to the development of a concept. *Cultural Studies*, [*S.l.*], v. 21, n. 2-3, p. 240-270, 2007.

Martinez, J. Z. *Entre fios, pistas e rastros*: os sentidos emaranhados da internacionalização da Educação Superior. 2017. 2013 f. Tese (Doutorado em Letras) – Faculdade de Filosofia, Letras e Ciências Humanas, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2017.

Menezes De Souza, L. M. T. Strategic Complicity in Neoliberal Educational Internationalization: the case of the production of entrepreneurial subjects in Ciências sem Fronteiras. In: Maciel, R. F. *et al.* (org.). *Linguística Aplicada para além das Fronteiras*. 1ed. Campinas: Pontes Editores, 2018. p. 205-216.

Mignolo, W. D. Delinking: The rhetoric of modernity, the logic of coloniality and the grammar of de-coloniality. *Cultural Studies*, [*S.l.*], v. 21, n. 2-3, p. 449-514, March/May 2007.

Mignolo, W. D. *The darker side of western modernity*: global futures, decolonial options. North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2011.

Mignolo, W. D. Colonialidade: o lado mais escuro da modernidade. Trad. Marco Oliveira. *RBCS*, v. 32, n. 94, p. 1-18, 2017.

Pardo, F. da S. A autoetnografia em pesquisas em Linguística Aplicada: reflexões do sujeito pesquisador/pesquisado. *Horizontes de Linguística Aplicada*, [*S. l.*], ano 18, n. 2, p. 15-40, 2019.

Quijano, A. Coloniality of power and Eurocentrism in Latin America. *International Sociology*, v. 15, n. 2, p. 215-232, 2000.

Shahjahan, R. A. Being 'Lazy' and Slowing Down: Toward decolonizing time, our body, and pedagogy. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*: Incorporating ACCESS, [*S.l.*], v. 47, n. 5, p. 488-501, 2015.

Shahjahan, R. A.; Ramirez, G. B; Andreotti, V. de O. Attempting to Imagine the Unimaginable: A Decolonial Reading of Global University Rankings. *Comparative Education Review,* v. 61, n. S1, 2017.

Sousa Santos, B. de. Para além do pensamento abissal: das linhas globais a uma ecologia de saberes. *Novos estudos*, [*S.l.*], n. 79, p. 71-94, 2007.

Sousa Santos, B. de. *A gramática do tempo*: por uma nova cultura política. São Paulo: Cortez Editora, v. 4, 3. ed., 2010.

Stein, S. Critical internationalization studies at an impasse: making space for complexity, uncertainty, and complicity in a time of global challenges. *Studies in Higher Education,* [*S.l.*], v. 46, n. 9, p. 1771-1784, 2019.

Stein, S.; Silva, J. E. da. Challenges and complexities of decolonizing internationalization in a time of global crises. *ETD - Educação Temática Digital*, Campinas, v. 22, n. 3, p. 546-566, 2020.

Stein, S. *et al.* From "education for sustainable development" to "education for the end of the world as we know it". *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, [*S.l.*], v. 54, n. 3, p. 274-287, 2022.

Szyszlo, P. Internationalization Strategies for the Global Knowledge Society. *CBIE PhD Research Series*, Ottawa, p. 1–7, 2016.