v. 25, n. 3, e49947, 2025
Universidadescola na formação de professoras/es de línguas
ISSN: 1984-6398 · DOI: 10.1590/1984-6398202549947

Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada

Thematic Dossier

English Language Learning, Racism, and Social Justice Education: Bridging the Gap Towards the Empowerment of Deaf Students

Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa, racismo e educação para a Justiça Social: preenchendo a lacuna para o empoderamento de estudantes surdos

Matheus Lucas de Almeida*
*Universidade Federal de Campina Grande (UFCG) | Campina Grande PB | BR
matheus.lucas@professor.ufcg.edu.br
http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6215-9928

Juanna Beatriz de Brito Gouveia**
**Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN) | Natal | RN | BR
jbbgouveia@yahoo.com.br
http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0707-5780

Antonio Henrique Coutelo de Moraes***
***Universidade Federal de Rondonópolis (UFR) | Rondonópolis MT | BR
antonio.moraes@ufr.edu.br
http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5519-1583

Abstract: This qualitative (Triviños, 1987) study investigates the integration of social justice education frameworks, specifically discussions on racism and the Black Lives Matter movement, into English language education for deaf students in Brazil. Data analyzed were generated in two classes with a cohort of deaf high school students who were enrolled in English classes in a federal institution in Brazil during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings demonstrate that the teacher's use of scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1998) and open-ended discussions were instrumental in fostering not only linguistic development, but also significantly cultivating critical thinking skills and a sense of social responsibility among the participating students. Student responses revealed a growing awareness of racism's multifaceted nature and their ability to connect local realities with global struggles. We base our discussions on authors such as Jucá and Mattos (2021), Bento (2022), Freire (2005), hooks (1994), Vygotsky (1998), among others. The results demonstrate that this integrated approach redefines language acquisition from a mere linguistic exercise into a powerful tool for critical social engagement, thereby empowering students to emerge as informed, active, and engaged global citizens.

Keywords: deaf education; English language; social justice; language education.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/ or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

Resumo: Este estudo qualitativo (Triviños, 1987) investiga a integração de referenciais de educação para a justiça social, especificamente discussões sobre racismo e o movimento Black Lives Matter, na educação linguística em língua inglesa para estudantes surdos no Brasil. Os dados analisados foram gerados em duas aulas com um grupo de estudantes surdos do ensino médio, matriculados na disciplina de inglês, em um instituto federal no Brasil, durante a pandemia da COVID-19. Os resultados demonstram que o uso de *scaffolding* (Vygotsky, 1998) e discussões por parte do professor foram instrumentais para fomentar não apenas o desenvolvimento linguístico, mas também para cultivar significativamente o pensamento crítico e um senso de responsabilidade social entre os estudantes participantes. As respostas dos estudantes revelaram o crescimento da consciência em relação à natureza multifacetada do racismo e de suas capacidades de conectar realidades locais com lutas globais. Baseamos nossas discussões em autores como Jucá e Mattos (2021), Bento (2022), Freire (2005), hooks (1994), Vygotsky (1998), entre outros. Os resultados demonstram que esta abordagem integrada redefine a aquisição de línguas de um mero exercício linguístico para uma poderosa ferramenta de engajamento social crítico, capacitando os estudantes a se tornarem cidadãos globais informados, ativos e engajados.

Palavras-chave: educação de surdos; língua inglesa; justiça social; educação linguística.

> We need to ask and answer ourselves *how we have been educating* and *for what purposes* (Jucá; Mattos, 2021, p. 326).

1 Intersections of Language, Power, and Justice

English has transcended its role as a communication tool, becoming an instrument of social dominance and power dynamics (Mattos, 2014). Consequently, classrooms must transform into spaces where students can "communicate, not only in the most efficient way possible, but also in ways that set the stage for relationship building and problem solving" (Randolph Jr.;

Johnson, 2017, p. 103). This demands a shift beyond solely teaching grammatical structures. Language educators must address issues pertinent to students' lives, empowering them to critically use language for social change.

hooks (1994) argues that education is not merely about acquiring knowledge or skills, but rather about practicing freedom. The author emphasizes the importance of critical thinking, empathy, and collective action in fostering social change. She also highlights the significance of language in shaping our understanding of the world and ourselves. She argues that language is not neutral, but rather is imbued with power and can be used to reinforce or challenge dominant ideologies. According to hooks (1994), we can begin dismantling oppressive systems and creating more equitable and just societies by critically examining language and its role in shaping social structures.

This transformative learning experience transcends language acquisition, focusing on developing critical consciousness and fostering more equitable ways of interacting with others (Randolph Jr.; Johnson, 2017). As language educators, we must integrate discussions of real-world problems that impact students' realities, such as accessibility, inequality, gender, race, and prejudice. Jucá and Mattos (2021) argue that as formally educated participants in society, advocating for a critical education is an obligation that also extends to us. In this process, criticality is substantial, as it allows students to raise doubt through dialogue and the problematization of social inequalities (Urzêda-Freitas, 2012).

Nevertheless, the Brazilian educational context presents unique challenges. One obstacle is students' varying literacy levels, compounded by difficulties in acquiring English literacy. Although English is mandatory in elementary and high schools, focusing on interculturality (Brasil, 2018), these objectives often remain unfulfilled. Jucá and Mattos (2021, p. 313) aptly point out that "the vast majority of Brazilians understand, based on personal experience, the significant disparity between the current state of education and the ideal of an inclusive system fostering political, economic freedom, and responsible citizenship". According to Randolph Jr. and Johnson (2017, p. 103), "we cannot hope to teach students to engage in intercultural communication without imparting awareness of the inequities that exist between and within communities". In this sense, discussing race is something that should happen in all classrooms, yet it is a neglected topic.

> Discussions on racial issues in Basic Education (which are supported by laws 10,639/03 and 11,645/08) become essential for more teachers and students to develop critical racial awareness, constituting important pillars for the promotion of Anti-Racist Education (Santos; Oliveira; El Kadri, 2021, p, 169).[1]

Despite Laws No. 10,639/03 and 11,645/08 mandating the study of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous history and culture in elementary and high school, these themes are not compulsory in many teacher education programs. There is a crucial need for an ongoing, permanent policy for teacher development, underscoring that no initial training is ever truly complete. This requires continuous engagement and a shared responsibility for ongoing professional growth, so teachers are likely to integrate these discussions into their lessons.

[1] All direct quotations not originally in English were freely translated by the authors.

Furthermore, discussions on race in language classrooms have received less attention in higher education. Anti-racist education is crucial to address pervasive racism in society, even within schools. Teachers and students need to be equipped to identify and handle racist situations that arise in everyday school life (Santos; Oliveira; El Kadri, 2021). Including such debates is crucial to empowering students and transforming them into social change agents who can read words and worlds (Freire, 2005).

Discussions on race are generally limited in English classrooms, and even more so in classes with students with disabilities, such as deaf students. The Common National Curriculum Base (BNCC) (Brasil, 2018) emphasizes an intercultural approach to English language teaching that considers student backgrounds. However, Junior (2021) confirms that the BNCC's English Language proposals do not present any evident ethnic-racial nature. While it is widely acknowledged that Brazil has a predominantly non-white population, the assertion that students' backgrounds should be considered in educational settings remains a subject of debate. There is also no guidance on how to teach English, in general, to deaf students or on how to implement the discussion of race to them. We reinforce what Pereira (2014) highlighted a decade ago: there is an urgent need for more resources to support English teachers in teaching deaf learners. Furthermore, considering the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015), particularly those related to quality education and equity, there should be increased focus on discussions and projects concerning teaching English to deaf students, and race should not be out of this debate. This safeguards their right to quality education and linguistic rights, without losing sight of the fact that acquiring English involves navigating the interplay of sign language (L1), Portuguese (L2), and English (L3), and must therefore be supported with approaches that respect this linguistic and cultural complexity.

This qualitative study (Triviños, 1987) investigates the integration of social justice education frameworks, specifically discussions on racism and the Black Lives Matter movement, into English language education for deaf students in Brazil. Data analyzed were generated within two classes involving a cohort of deaf high school students who were enrolled in English classes in a federal institution in Brazil during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following this introduction, we examine critical pedagogical approaches that can promote critical language learning among deaf students. We then analyze data generated from an English class with deaf students in which the Black Lives Matter movement served as the central theme. Finally, we present considerations for English language educators who wish to integrate discussions on social issues into their lessons with deaf students.

2 Teaching Critically Toward Social Justice

Urzêda-Freitas (2012) defines critical language proficiency as the ability to understand a language and be aware of the societal impact of its use. This requires students to recognize how their language choices can affect themselves and others. As educators, we must encourage students to reflect on how their values, beliefs, and language practices might contribute to maintaining prejudice and discrimination, even towards themselves (Urzêda-Freitas, 2012). According to Jucá and Mattos (2021, p. 328), critical language education "may help to raise

the education standards in Brazil, leading to what we have been calling *quality education*, as stated in the Constitution".

Randolph Jr. and Johnson (2017, p. 106) emphasize the importance of student-driven exploration: "cultures and communities ultimately must speak for themselves and students must engage in critical, reflective inquiry to discover cultures and communities". Incorporating critical discussions of real-world issues in our language classrooms allows students to develop linguistically and critically as citizens. Randolph Jr. and Johnson (2017, p. 110) suggest including a variety of topics, such as: "immigration, employment, environment, linguicism, racism, xenophobia, violence and weapons, stereotypes, sexuality, sexism, poverty, identity, education, institutions, marginalization, and diversity".

However, implementing Critical Language Teaching (CLT) in Brazilian classrooms presents challenges. Mattos (2014, p. 127) observes that teachers often struggle due to "a lack of theoretical grounding and limited experience with learning through CLT themselves". This highlights the importance of research and discussion on CLT, as it can improve student criticality and society. Building on Urzêda-Freitas' (2012) focus on language and power, Mattos (2014, p. 130) describes Critical Literacy (CL) as a pedagogical approach that "focuses on issues of power expressed through language. Critical Literacy also deals with complexity, fostering independent thinking, ethical relationships, and decision-making participatory processes". This approach can be a valuable tool for language educators to promote critical reflection in the classroom.

Jackson (2023) encourages educators to adopt a Critical Language Pedagogy (CLP) as it can create engaging and social learning environments for students. It helps educators create social equitable learning environments, aligning with the broader goals of promoting educational diversity and equity. CLP is a perspective that helps language teachers navigate the complexities of values in additional language teaching. However, Jackson (2023) also mentions the challenges behind it. One of them is that educators need help shifting from traditional 'teacher-fronted' classrooms to more interactive learning environments, especially at a time when the changes are dynamic and appear in different spheres, such as economic, environmental, geopolitical, and social landscapes. Adapting teaching practices to address these uncertainties while upholding ethical standards and promoting critical awareness poses significant challenges in language education. Nevertheless, as Jackson (2023) points out, this transition involves empowering students to have a more active role in their education, which can be challenging for teachers accustomed to a more teacher-centered teaching style, but it contributes intensively to students' social and educational formation, as does to the teacher.

Teaching through the lens of social justice presents different challenges that make it important for educators to navigate the classroom in an attempt to promote a truly just and effective learning environment. The challenges can range from language barriers, since we are teaching students who do not have English as their first language, to the sensitivity of students' pedagogical needs, the (re)creation of methods and approaches, and support in the classroom.

When it comes to deaf students, it is important to bear in mind that the content should be accessible to them, which means that it should be in sign language. But more than that, as Subin and Liang-Itsara (2022) highlight, it is also important that the texts used have a good and careful selection of visual aids, captioned videos, and written texts that are clear and free from auditory cues. When teaching English grammar to deaf students, it is crucial to

consider the contrastive grammatical features between their first language, which in Brazil is the Brazilian sign language (Libras), and English, especially in the absence of auditory cues. Subin and Liang-Itsara (2022) emphasize the importance of addressing these linguistic differences in order to facilitate effective learning. Adapting pedagogical methods to meet the needs of deaf students is vital.

Traditional teaching approaches need to be modified to include more visual and interactive elements. Lee *et al*. (2022) suggests strategies like community-engaged learning, social action-oriented learning, and written reflections to foster social justice values among students. These methods emphasize students' affective experiences, which are critical for their deeper engagement with social justice issues.

Cultural competence is essential when teaching social justice to deaf students. Educators must be aware of the intersectional challenges faced by black deaf students, who may experience both racism and ableism. Creating a respectful and equitable classroom environment is essential, as it empowers students to meaningfully engage with social and humanitarian issues. This involves creating spaces where students feel comfortable discussing sensitive topics like racism and social justice. Educators should strive to build trust with their students and ensure that classroom practices are respectful of deaf culture and communication preferences. The importance of empathy and sensitivity when addressing controversial topics cannot be overstated, as it aids in fostering a supportive learning environment.

Bringing social justice to deaf students in an English class requires a multifaceted approach that addresses language barriers, cultural sensitivity, and pedagogical adaptations. By creating a respectful and equitable classroom environment, using effective teaching methods, and ensuring accessibility, educators can empower deaf students to engage critically with social justice issues. Strategies such as intergroup dialogue, community-engaged learning, and social action-oriented learning can be particularly effective in fostering social justice values among students (Lanteigne *et al*., 2023). Ultimately, our goal as educators is to inspire the next generation of social justice advocates by providing a supportive and equitable learning environment. With that in mind, in the next section, we will discuss the Black Lives Matter movement and its importance in debating racism in the classroom.

3 Black Lives Matter Movement and the Importance of Discussing Racism in the Classroom

> It is clear that white people do not hold secret meetings at five in the morning to define how they are going to maintain their privileges and exclude black people. But it is as if it were: the forms of exclusion and maintenance of privileges in the most different types of institutions are similar and systematically denied or silenced (Bento, 2022, p. 18).

The Black Lives Matter movement emerged in response to the collective sense of injustice and despair felt by black communities (Ross, 2015). Founded by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi, the movement demanded political and social redress for the lives lost to police brutality. This movement has also spurred critical examinations of racism, particularly in educational settings

The Black Lives Matter movement's philosophical framework explains oppression and collective identity to understand black solidarity (Shelby, 2002). This framework emphasizes the importance of shared experiences with racism, including oppression, discriminatory treatment, and marginalization. Through this shared discourse, the movement has constructed social norms regarding racial acceptability and has fostered a sense of collective identity.

Racism, as a systemic issue embedded in institutions, policies, and cultural norms, continues to appear in various forms, including individual racism, institutional racism, and systemic racism. The impact of racism is far-reaching and affects individuals, communities, and society as a whole. It can result in disparities in education, employment, healthcare, housing, and the criminal justice system. As Ferreira (2014, p. 250) points out: "to have a more just and egalitarian society, we have to mobilize all white and black racial identities to reflect on race and racism and critically work in the school context in all subjects of the curriculum". Moreover, racism can have a significant psychological impact on individuals. It may lead to feelings of marginalization, discrimination, and inferiority, which can have a detrimental effect on mental health and well-being. Therefore, it is paramount to explicitly change non-verbalized agreements that perpetuate racism (Bento, 2022).

Hughes (2020) argues that racism has been deeply ingrained throughout history and has functioned as a central system within human society. While curricula often include historical events, such as colonization, the slave trade, and the Holocaust, a critical examination of these events as systems of exploitation is lacking. Are students encouraged to analyze these historical transitions through a critical lens of race? Alternatively, are they simply absorbing the myth of racial democracy, a narrative that downplays racism in Brazil by positioning it as a problem limited to North America and South Africa?

> Perhaps as a reaction to the demystification of the myth-ideology of "racial democracy", currents of neo-racism are emerging in Brazil since the 2000s, precisely in the period in which, for the first time, the State itself publicly manifests its preoccupation with the growing picture of socio-racial inequalities. Thus, there is a growing tendency to trivialize racism, either by lowering it to the sphere of purely impersonal relations, or by reducing it to the level of mere prejudices that "everyone has" (Wedderburn, c2007, p. 16).

According to Telles (2004), the Brazilian racial context is marked by a complex social hierarchy built on the foundation of skin color, distinct from the more dichotomous racial stratification found elsewhere. Discursive constructions of race in Brazil are highly fluid, leading to significant subjectivity within racial groups and a high degree of ambiguity. This social hierarchy is reflected in the stark socioeconomic disparities. Non-white Brazilians are disproportionately represented in lower social classes, experiencing lower incomes, greater housing insecurity (Henriques, 2001), and less social mobility than white Brazilians (Telles, 2004). These inequalities are perpetuated by historical discourses on racial hierarchy, which have been presented since the nineteenth century (Foucault, 2001).

Schools, unfortunately, often mirror this larger societal reality. Many students experience racism daily, often without recognizing its harmful effects (Vieira, 2022). Although Brazil has a law mandating the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture, as well as the celebration of Black Awareness Day, simply including these topics in the curriculum is not enough. Schools need to go further and equip students with the skills they

need to participate in society and challenge oppressive discourses, especially in the digital age, and language education is particularly important for developing these skills (Santos; Oliveira; El Kadri, 2021).

Vieira (2022) argues that the effectiveness of racist ideology lies in its ability to normalize and naturalize power imbalances within society. For this reason, as language educators, we must critically engage in these issues in the classroom, empowering students to challenge this entrenched system. Education plays a crucial role in deconstructing racist narratives and fostering a more accurate comprehension of historical events. Through the instruction of students regarding the historical and contemporary manifestations of racism, educators can provide them with the knowledge and tools to challenge discriminatory practices and advocate for social change. "Whiteness is a topic that needs to be considered in teacher-training courses so that what is constructed in the name of power can be deconstructed and discussed in the name of equality and social justice" (Ferreira, 2014, p. 248).

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has catalyzed increased social media use, bringing global tragedies to greater public attention (Vieira, 2022). The brutal murder of George Floyd by police officer Derek Chauvin in Minneapolis, captured on video and widely disseminated online, sparked renewed global conversations about racism and anti-racism movements. The Black Lives Matter movement gained significant traction, promoting widespread demonstrations against racism and fascism globally. Beyond public protests, the movement advocates for policies and educational curricula that incorporate the experiences of Black individuals. The Black Lives Matter movement has been instrumental in increasing awareness of systemic racism and mobilizing individuals to demand racial justice. The movement has emphasized the need for reforms in police practices, criminal justice systems, and economic structures. Additionally, it has called for a broader societal shift towards greater racial equity and inclusion.

Brazil's 300-year history of slavery – the last country in the Americas to formally abolish it – continues to cast a long shadow. The legacy of slavery has resulted in the marginalization of Black Brazilians within society.

> In a conservative and racist society like Brazil, which, on the one hand, promotes a racial war against black, indigenous, and impoverished people and, on the other hand, guarantees symbolic, material, legal-institutional, and imaginary privileges for white people, what meanings and practices can acquire the anti-racist fight? (Vieira, 2022, p. 54).

We advocate that it is crucial to cultivate collective awareness of how racism hinders the advancement of black lives. Engaging in the critical discourse around social justice education requires one to acknowledge the interconnectedness between classroom struggles and broader societal issues. Brazilian schools, like their American counterparts, have historically perpetuated racist ideologies through curricula centered on Eurocentric narratives. Dávila (2006, p. 21) argues that early twentieth-century Brazilian education leaders, while not explicitly excluding black students, have sought to assimilate them into a "healthy, culturally European, physically fit, nationalistic 'Brazilian race'". These leaders viewed the poor, largely non-white, population as racially and culturally inferior. This is why it is paramount to fight for equity.

> Equity lies in the territory of building better organizations to work in, better worlds to live in, and more democratic and fair environments. This implies recognizing at the same time the other and who we are, learning our reciprocal places, situating our roles, and identifying in the structure of our organizations the elements that foster supremacy and the history that generated burdens for some and bonuses for others. And continue making essential institutional changes (Bento, 2022, p. 129).

Colonialization throughout Africa, the Americas, and other regions subjected to European control established a system of oppression based on the notion of white supremacy. Unfortunately, this devaluation of black lives and experiences continues to appear in unequal treatment across various social contexts. Omitting these realities from the school curriculum is a harmful and blatant display of racism. More than just discussing the bad heritage of slavery to black people, it is also essential to discuss the positive impacts, concerning privileges, that white people receive from it (Bento, 2022).

Pereira (2012) highlights the strategic shift undertaken by the Black movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Black activists increasingly focused on entering educational spaces, producing knowledge, developing teaching materials, and influencing public school teachers. Recognizing the curriculum as a key battleground in the fight for social justice, they lobbied for equity in developing official curricular policies. In Brazil, these efforts resulted in significant achievements, such as their participation in the drafting of the National Curricular Parameters (PCN) (Brasil, 1998), and the National Curricular Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations (Brasil, 2004). Despite these advancements, the ongoing task of constructing curricula that represent the diverse histories and cultures that make Brazilian society remains crucial.

Transcending Eurocentrism is imperative in facilitating student recognition of diverse individual and social identities. Educators within and beyond the classroom must cultivate responsible citizenship, promote respect for diversity, and engage in cultural pluralism. Understanding the intersectional nature of oppression is essential for developing effective strategies to address racism. By recognizing the interconnectedness of these forms of oppression, we can endeavor to create a more equitable society for all. This commitment is key to constructing a democratic educational perspective across various social contexts. Language educators in particular must strive to move beyond merely teaching grammar and vocabulary and instead embrace the critical task of teaching toward social justice. The curriculum itself requires critical examination through a framework that reflects the experiences and perspectives of black students.

Language educators possess a unique opportunity to contribute to the fight against racism. Educators can assist students in analyzing how language is utilized to perpetuate stereotypes and reinforce power imbalances by incorporating critical language awareness into their pedagogy. Furthermore, as language educators, we can establish equitable and culturally responsive classrooms that celebrate diversity and promote understanding. In the following section, we present an experience discussing racism and the Black Lives Matter movement in an English class with deaf students that shows that this is possible to promote social justice within a language teaching setting.

4 "It Is Said that He Has Changed the World": George Floyd and The Black Lives Matter in an English Class with Deaf Students

This section details the research conducted at a federal institution in Brazil in a high school English class with secondary deaf students. The study protocol in the original research project was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee, logged under protocol number CAAE 40455720.8.0000.5206, and received clearance on December 11, 2020.

The first author, the English teacher who led the activities, conducted the lesson in the second semester of 2021 via Google Meet. The class took place remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The bilingual institution offers classes for deaf and hearing students separately and in mixed settings, but the data analyzed here was generated with a group of four deaf students. The students had their cameras open and an interpreter translated between Portuguese and Libras as needed to facilitate classroom communication between students and teacher. Students could also clarify English vocabulary with the interpreter, who would translate the teacher's explanation into Libras. The discussions analyzed here happened in two different meetings, lasting one hour each.

The activities developed were designed according to the principle of Scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1998), understood as a dialogical and collaborative support that enhances students' learning within their zone of proximal development. Thus, teacher mediation, the use of an interpreter, and visual and discursive resources create a collaborative learning environment, fostering the collective construction of knowledge.

The teacher relied on a sign language interpreter to mediate meaning between the students' first language (Libras), their second language (Portuguese), and the target language (English). This linguistic mediation reduced comprehension barriers and enabled collaborative dialogue.

The teacher applied a warm-up exercise, the "Poetry of a Black Deaf Man" (*Poesia de um surdo negro*),[2] a video showcasing a black deaf poet's experiences with police brutality. This video features a man performing a poem in sign language about his experience as a black deaf person and the racism he suffers by the police. He is dressed in a black t-shirt with a skull design and beige pants. A projector behind him displays text, and a DJ is present to his right. The video is resourceful in showcasing a unique performance art form, blending poetry, sign language, and identity. It provides a visual and expressive experience of the poem. There are no subtitles in the video, but an interpreter is translating to Portuguese what the deaf poet is signaling. These visual inputs served as additional scaffolds to support students' understanding of complex social justice topics.

This choice highlights the importance of incorporating student realities into the classroom (Vygotsky, 1998; Freire, 2005). By presenting a perspective that resonates with their deafness and Black identity, the teacher was able to engage the students, and to create a meaningful connection between the students' personal experiences and the broader social issues being discussed. This contextual relevance is an affective scaffold: it sustains motivation and links prior knowledge to new learning.

[2] CARMO, E. *Poesia Negro surdo*. São Paulo: [s.n.], 17 Nov. 2017. 1 video (2:36). Published by Edinho Carmo. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_iPayPxh-h8. Accessed on: 15 Sept 2024.

Vygotsky's (1998) concept of the zone of proximal development is relevant here. By providing students with a context that was personally meaningful and challenging, the teacher created a learning environment where students could actively engage with the material and develop new understandings. Freire's (2005) emphasis on critical pedagogy is also evident in the teacher's approach. By encouraging students to infer meaning, brainstorm ideas, and discuss their understanding, the teacher was fostering critical thinking and empowering students to become active participants in their own learning. This scaffolding technique supported students in moving from basic comprehension to deeper critical reflection.

> While initial comprehension of the video was limited, the teacher employed questions to encourage students to infer meaning and brainstorm ideas about the video. At first, some students did not relate to the racism mentioned in the video, but after a few questions, some of them were able to share some experiences they have had. After that, the teacher checked their understanding of the Black Lives Matter movement, revealing that only one student had prior exposure. He prompted them to discuss their understanding of the movement to stimulate participation. A video[3] about the movement's history, with captions in Portuguese, provided further context on the issue. Students had some problems in fully understanding at first, so the teacher played the video twice. The video's pacing, as well as the appearance of subtitles and visual cues, likely worked together to significantly improve students' comprehension of the movement. This practice aligns with scaffolding by calibrating the challenge to their zone of proximal development. Moreover, this multimodal approach seems to be effective in teaching deaf students and in reinforcing complex information.

The subsequent video[4] on George Floyd's case and the global response to his murder served as a powerful demonstration of the impact real-world issues can have on student learning. At first, the subtitles were in English, but students showed difficulties, so the teacher put them in Portuguese, which facilitated students' comprehension. By understanding the historical context, students were better able to appreciate the broader implications of the event and its impact on society, and witnessing this injustice evoked empathy within them.

The video and the discussions that followed corroborate Bento (2022, p. 53) when she points out that: "based on racism, groups are chosen to die based on state discourse that defines them as a threat, justifying their extermination to ensure order and security". One of the students, for example, wrote that:

Racism exists, we have the most racist police in the world, police that kill the most black people in the world out of pure racism. The poorest population in Brazil is black. People suffer racism because of their skin tone, their big lips, the way their hair looks. I repeat we are the most racist country in the world, even though Brazil's population is mostly black, racism prevails.[5]

---

[3] DW BRASIL. *Uma breve história do movimento Black Lives Matter*. [S.l.]: DW Brasil, 21 Jul. 2020. 1 video (2:19). Published by DW Brasil. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXpuvmOyRrs. Accessed on: September 2024.

[4] GREAT BIG STORY. Black Lives Matter Protests Around the World. [Sl.]: Great Big Story, 12 Jun. 2020. 1 video (0:46). Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Vl4I0weXPU&t=3s. Accessed on: September 2024.

[5] "o racismo existe, nós temos a polícia mais racista do mundo, polícia que mais mata pessoas negras no mundo por puro racismo. A população mais pobre do brasil é negra. Pessoas sofrem racismo por causa do seu tom de pele, dos seus lábios grandes, do jeito do cabelo. Repito, somos o país mais racista do mundo, mesmo a população do brasil seja majoritariamente negra, o racismo prevalece."

This confirms what Bento (2022) highlights when she says that racism is not merely an ideology, but also a tool of power used by the State to legitimize violence. By classifying certain groups as a "threat", the State creates a discourse that justifies the exclusion, marginalization, and, in extreme cases, the extermination of these groups. And students are aware of it, as some of them experience this daily.

The teacher then introduced key terms related to the movement and racism, encouraging students to connect them to their lives. The words were: Black Lives Matter, handcuffed, protestors, slogan, silence, breathe, equality, journalist, support, human beings, dialogue, fairness, and conversations. The choice of these words occurred, as they appeared in some extracts of materials used in the class that day.

The teacher emphasized using dictionaries as a tool for independent learning while remaining available for further clarification. This happened because he believes this empowers students to become more autonomous learners. This technique scaffolds both language development and critical content understanding. One student's connection of "human beings" to the concept of non-discrimination resonated with their experience as part of the deaf community, highlighting the potential for intersectional discussions about social justice. Another student recognized the importance of representation within journalism, advocating for more black journalists to share their experiences. These insightful observations demonstrate the value of fostering critical reflection in the classroom.

Despite initially limited knowledge about the Black Lives Matter movement, the discussion served as a springboard for further exploration. The next stage of the lesson involved presenting a table for students to identify and propose solutions for racism in various contexts. This underscores the effectiveness of incorporating social justice themes and student realities into language learning. The teacher's use of scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1998) with the open-ended discussion format facilitated critical thinking and fostered a sense of social responsibility within the students.

It is essential to highlight that the learning sequence moved from a collective discussion, to group brainstorming, to individual or small-group writing tasks (e.g., filling in tables, writing reflections). This gradual release of responsibility is a classic scaffolding structure: from guided to independent work.

Table 1 – Topics discussed in the classroom

	Forms of Racism	How We Reduce It
Education		
Government		
Police		
Courts		
Jobs		
The streets		

Source: the authors.

The students' emphasis on the need for equal treatment within educational spaces and their acknowledgment of ongoing prejudice against Black people and the deaf community underscores the systemic nature of racism. Their call for further mobilization highlights the potential for classroom discussions to extend beyond the academic sphere and influence students' political and critical engagement with their realities.

The discussion about government showcases the importance of clear communication and context setting in facilitating meaningful discussions. The student's reference to former – at that time – US President Donald Trump's anti-democratic and racist rhetoric exemplifies their developing awareness of global political issues and their connection to social justice struggles. Their suggestion of black voter mobilization as a strategy for social change reflects a nascent understanding of civic engagement and its potential for positive societal transformation.

The student's proposal for increased black representation within police forces as a means of reducing police violence against black people reveals a limited understanding of the systemic nature of racism. The teacher's prompt regarding the possibility of racism among black people and their families challenged this initial perspective. The student's subsequent realization of the concept of institutionalized racism demonstrates their capacity for critical reflection and their growing awareness of the complex web of factors that perpetuate racial injustice. Another student wrote, in English, the following passage:

> I can't disagree with this movement, because people have every support, and since countries are supporting blacks for the same time, blacks need to be treated "equality," many years, that blacks still suffer for racism, violence, mistreatment, and others. I just disagree that the cops are killing the black lives they didn't do wrong, unarmed, no evil, because of that, people see the different color between white and black, but it's just color, nothing to see people be different, they're human they want equality, peace, justice. The blacks have family (parents, daughter, son, brother, sister, friends, etc.), even the cops kill young blacks. Everything is inequality. (*sic*)

Although the statement "people see the different color between white and black, but it's just color" oversimplifies the complex ways in which race is socially constructed and can lead to discriminatory practices, it is possible to observe in the student's answer that she understands the discrimination that prevails in society and is against it. This answer also expresses support for the Black Lives Matter movement, and the student primarily addresses the issue of police brutality against unarmed Black individuals. The testimonial emphasizes the importance of racial equality and challenges the notion that black people deserve mistreatment.

Due to time constraints, the discussion on racism in everyday contexts, particularly the issue of racial profiling, could not be explored at that meeting. However, a student's additional written response (transcribed here verbatim) posted on the Moodle platform[6] suggests continued engagement with the lesson's themes. Further analysis of these written

[6] Moodle is one of the official online platforms used by the institution to share activities and content with students. After every synchronous meeting, the teacher would upload materials to help students to review and broaden topics that were discussed during the lessons.

responses would provide valuable insights into the student's evolving understanding of social justice issues.

Table 2 – Answers of a student

	Forms of Racism	How We Reduce It
Education	The person with education badly bullying blacks but a lack of education.	The well-educated person helps black people also black people but respects black people.
Government	The government prejudices blacks, but it has no respect and helps black people.	The government is respecting black people because they help black people but black people want to vote in the government.
Police	The police don't have respect for blacks but blacks don't rob. because of prejudice black cops.	The cop has respect for blacks. Most cops with blacks are respecting and helping any colored person.
Courts	Courts in people hate black people. blacks we're free but courts don't want blacks free because blacks steal but they blacks don't do robbery. We black people want to respect people but we have problems.	Courts. black people fight because we respect and help but black people want free peace.
Jobs	Jobs can't work with blacks because he wants to work with whites but blacks are angry. black people fight and want to work.	Black respects jobs with working. black people struggle a lot to help and work.
The streets	The streets. People fear streets with black people but black people do not rob.	the street, any normal person. also normal black people the street.

Source: the authors.

In Table 2, it is possible to see one of the student's responses about forms of racism and how to reduce them. This student answered the activity in English, which demonstrates the connection between language proficiency and engagement with social justice issues. As ongoing feedback plays a crucial role in the learning process, the teacher praised the student for communicating ideas in English and offered constructive suggestions regarding grammatical structures to foster fluency and clarity. This continuous cycle of feedback and learning empowers students and enhances their engagement in the language acquisition process. By providing targeted feedback on students' written English (grammar, word choice) while respecting ideas and opinions, the teacher supported both linguistic accuracy and critical engagement, helping students develop their language output.

The analysis of student responses in Table 2 reveals the potential for English language teachers to foster language proficiency, critical thinking, social awareness, and civic engagement. By creating a supportive and equitable learning environment, providing opportunities for students to engage in social justice themes, and offering constructive

feedback, teachers can empower students to become active and engaged citizens. Another student mentioned that:

> I don't agree, black people suffer more every day in different ways. I agree that we have to respect people like everyone else. It also draws attention to all wars and even with people they never stop fighting for what is their right...It's a thing of equality of person, that human also heart equality of person. (*sic*)

Other students also emphasized the importance of combating prejudice and voiced their support for social movements like Black Lives Matter. This aligns with the concluding activity, where the teacher provided additional resources on the Moodle platform to further student exploration of these themes.

An end-of-term survey explored student perceptions of their learning experience. In one of the questions, the teacher asked: "In one of our classes, we discussed the Black Lives Matter movement and racism. What are your thoughts on discussing these topics in English class? Do you consider it important? Why?"

The student responses were overwhelmingly positive. There were comments like "I think discussing this topic is very important"[7] and:

> It's important to learn about Black Lives Matter and racism because there were things I didn't know, like the fact that George Floyd's legacy spread around the world and people said he changed the world. That's why it's necessary to learn more information. I learned a lot from the class discussion. It was a good discussion.[8]

This highlights the students' recognition of the value of integrating social justice issues into language learning. They acknowledge that learning extends beyond mere grammar and vocabulary acquisition, encompassing the broader social context. The student's testimonial demonstrates a positive learning experience and shows the need for further exploration and critical analysis. By delving deeper into the historical context, intersectional perspectives, police brutality, and the role of media, students can develop a more nuanced understanding of the Black Lives Matter movement and the ongoing struggle for racial justice.

One student further emphasizes this point, stating:

> I found it very important. There were things I didn't know, and it was good to learn, study, and practice a lot of English words. It's not just about studying content; the English teacher teaches students to learn news and information (from America) so they can communicate/write in English. For example, posts on Instagram have English phrases, and we need to know what they say. Other social networks have a lot of information in English about what happened with the Black movement in the US, or other things, especially in English.[9]

---

[7] "Acho que esse assunto é muito importante de ser debatido".

[8] "É importante sobre o Black Lives Matter e o racismo, porque alguns assuntos que eu não sabia, tipo que eu não sabia o George foi o legado pelo mundo e pessoas disseram que ele mudou o mundo e entre outros. Por isso é necessário por saber mais as informações, aprendi bem da aula que discutimos. Foi boa discussão".

[9] "Achei muito importante, alguns que não sabia, foi bom de aprender, estudar e praticar bastante para as palavras inglesas. Não é só para estudar os conteúdos do professor(a) de inglês ensina para os alunos aprendem

This student demonstrates an emerging awareness of global issues and the pivotal role of English language proficiency in accessing and engaging with this information. She acknowledges gaining new knowledge about the Black Lives Matter movement and racism, emphasizing the importance of studying beyond the language structure. This demonstrates a positive attitude towards learning and a recognition of the relevance of the subject matter.

Another student acknowledges the importance of social awareness but expresses limitations due to his English proficiency, stating "I found it important because it spread around the world, but this phrase is in English. Having basic English would have helped a lot to understand so much information".[10] This reinforces the value of English language education for deaf students, challenging the misconception that a third language is unnecessary or inaccessible to them.

While the data suggests a growing awareness of global issues among deaf students, it also highlights the disparities in language proficiency that can hinder their ability to fully engage in them. This raises questions about the effectiveness of current English language teaching methodologies for deaf students and the need to develop more equitable and accessible approaches. Moreover, the data reveals the complex interplay between language proficiency and social awareness. While English language proficiency can facilitate access to global information, it does not guarantee understanding or engagement. Social awareness and critical thinking skills are also essential for interpreting and analyzing information from diverse perspectives.

The data presented in this study underscores the importance of English language education for deaf students in fostering global awareness and critical thinking skills. However, it also highlights the challenges faced by deaf students in achieving proficiency in a third language and the need for more equitable and accessible language teaching methodologies. By addressing these challenges, we advocate that we can empower deaf students to become active and engaged citizens in a globalized world.

5 Reflecting on the Journey: Lessons Learned and Future Directions

"No one can do everything, but everyone can do something" (Randolph Jr.; Johnson, p. 117), and the students' testimonials and answers confirm the potential of language learning to transcend purely grammatical concerns and extend into the realm of social justice and critical thinking. Educators can empower students to become both proficient language users and informed and engaged global citizens by incorporating relevant social issues into the curriculum.

Social justice education can empower students, including those who are deaf, to acquire language skills and develop critical thinking abilities and a sense of social agency. English language teaching, often regarded as a conduit to global opportunities, can play a crucial role in fostering these outcomes. By integrating social justice themes into English

que as notícias, informações (americanas) para possa comunicar/escrever em inglês, por exemplo, as publicações do Instagram tem frase em inglês e devemos saber o que diz, outras redes sociais têm vários as informações em inglês sobre o que aconteceu o movimento negro em EUA, ou outra coisa, principalmente em inglês".

[10] "Eu achei importante por conta de que foi espalhado pelo mundo, mas esse frase é de inglês, por saber básicos inglês, ajudaria muito em saber tantas informações".

language classrooms, educators can equip deaf students with the necessary tools to navigate a complex world and advocate for change.

Critical Language Teaching (CLT) offers a particularly effective approach to integrating social justice into English language education. By cultivating critical thinking, cultural awareness, and social consciousness, CLT can assist students in developing the skills and knowledge required to challenge oppressive discourses and advocate for change.

It was possible to verify that CLT can establish equitable and empowering learning environments for all students, including the deaf ones. By combining social justice education with CLT, educators can provide deaf students with a transformative learning experience that equips them with the language skills, critical thinking abilities, and social agency necessary to become active and engaged citizens.

This paper has examined the intersection of social justice and language learning within a Brazilian classroom with deaf students. The analysis of classroom data underscores the transformative potential of integrating critical language teaching frameworks and discussions of real-world social issues into the English language curriculum.

The teacher's strategic use of scaffolding techniques and the open-ended discussion format fostered critical thinking and a sense of social responsibility among the students. Their responses revealed a growing awareness of racism's multifaceted nature, encompassing not only police brutality, but also educational inequality and media representation. Furthermore, the students' engagement with the Black Lives Matter movement demonstrates their ability to connect local realities with global struggles.

This study challenges the notion that language learning should be confined solely to grammar and vocabulary acquisition. By incorporating social justice themes that resonate with students' experiences, educators can empower them to become both proficient language users and informed and engaged global citizens. The students' evolving perspectives, as evidenced in their survey responses, highlight their growing recognition of the English language as a tool for critical engagement with the world around them.

However, we also acknowledge the limitations encountered. Time constraints restricted deeper exploration of certain themes, and some students identified their English proficiency as a barrier to full participation. Future research could explore strategies to address these limitations, potentially through differentiated teaching.

Racism is a pervasive and persistent issue that continues to have a significant impact on individuals, communities, and society as a whole. By addressing racism through education, advocacy, and systemic change, we can work towards creating a more just and equitable world for all.

Overall, this investigation offers valuable insights into the transformative power of integrating social justice themes into language learning, particularly for deaf students, who may face additional challenges in accessing information and engaging with global issues. By fostering critical reflection and a sense of social responsibility, educators can empower deaf students to become active participants in dismantling systemic racism and building a more just and equitable world.

Ethics Committee Report

The study protocol in the original research project was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee, logged under protocol number CAAE 40455720.8.0000.5206, and received clearance on December 11, 2020.

References

BENTO, C. *O pacto da branquitude*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2022.

BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. *Base nacional comum curricular*: ensino médio. Brasília: MEC/ Secretaria de Educação Básica, 2018.

BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. *Diretrizes curriculares nacionais para a educação plurilíngue*. Brasília: Conselho Nacional de Educação, 2020. Available at: http://portal.mec.gov.br/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&alias=1568 61-pceb002-20&category_slug=setembro-2020-pdf&Itemid=30192. Accessed on: 10 Nov. 2023.

BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. *Diretrizes curriculares nacionais para a educação das relações étnico-raciais e para o ensino de história e cultura afro-brasileira e africana na educação básica*. Brasília: MEC/ SECADI, 2004.

BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. *Parâmetros curriculares nacionais*: terceiro e quarto ciclos: língua estrangeira. Brasília: MECSEF, 1998.

DÁVILA, J. Diploma de brancura: política social e racial no Brasil: 1917-1945. São Paulo: Unesp, 2006.

FERREIRA, A. J. Teoria racial crítica e letramento racial crítico: narrativas e contranarrativas de identidade racial de professores de línguas. *Revista da Associação Brasileira de Pesquisadores/as Negros/as (ABPN)*, v. 6, n. 14, p. 236-263, 2014. Available at: https://abpnrevista.org.br/site/article/view/141. Accessed on:

FOUCAULT, M. *História da sexulidade microfisíca do poder*. Rio de Janeiro: Graal, 2001. p. 243-276.

FREIRE, P. *Pedagogia do oprimido*. 12. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 2005.

HENRIQUES, R. *Desigualdade racial no Brasil*: evolução das condições de vida na década de 90. Rio de Janeiro: IPEA, 2001.

HOOKS, b. *Teaching to Transgress*: Education as the Practice of Freedom. New York/London: Routledge, 1994.

HUGHES, C. The Implications of Black Lives Matter for Education: What can White People in Positions of Privilege Do. *Open Insights on International Education*, v. 1, n. 1, p. 1-4, 2020. Available at: https://www.unige.ch/fapse/erdie/application/files/6115/9490/3528/POEI1-Hughes.pdf. Accessed on:

JACKSON, L. Starting Points in Critical Language Pedagogy. *ELT Journal*, v. 77, n. 2, p. 277–279, abr. 2023. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccad015.

JESUS JUNIOR, J. Questões étnico-raciais nas propostas de língua inglesa da *Base nacional comum curricular*. *Revista Saridh–Linguagem e Discurso*, v. 3, n. 2, p. 15, 2021. DOI: https://doi.org/10.21680/2674-6131.2021v3n2ID26762.

JUCÁ, L. C. V; MATTOS, A. M. A. Education in Brazil: A Discussion of Current Problems and a Call to Action. *Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada*, v. 21, n. 2, p. 311-332, 2021. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1590/1984-6398202117982.

LANTEIGNE, I. et al. Teaching Note–Creating Spaces of Courage and Hope: Cultivating the Seeds of Social Justice. *Journal of Social Work Education*, v. 59, n. 3, p. 893-899, 2023. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2021.2019635.

LEE, E. *et al*. Pedagogical Methods of Teaching Social Justice in Social Work: A Scoping Review. *Research on Social Work Practice*, v. 32, n. 7, p. 762-783, 2022. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/10497315221085.

MATTOS, A. M. A. Educating Language Teachers for Social Justice Teaching. *Interfaces Brasil/Canadá*, v. 14, n. 2, p. 125-151, 2014. DOI: https://doi.org/10.15210/interfaces.v14i2.6738.

PEREIRA, A. Por uma autêntica democracia racial!: os movimentos negros nas escolas e nos currículos de história. *Revista História Hoje*, São Paulo, v. 1, n. 1, p. 111-128, 2012. DOI: https://doi.org/10.20949/rhhj.v1i1.21.

PEREIRA, K. A. Ensinando uma língua estrangeira para alunos surdos: saberes e práticas. *In*: ENCONTRO NACIONAL DE DIDÁTICA E PRÁTICA DE ENSINO-XVII ENDIPE, 17., 2014, Fortaleza. *Anais [...]*, Fortaleza: Universidade Estadual do Ceará, 2014.

RANDOLPH JR, L. J.; JOHNSON, S. M. Social Justice in the Language Classroom: A Call to Action. *Dimension*, v. 99, p. 121, 2017. Available at: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1207903.pdf, Accessed on:

ROSS, J. How Black Lives Matter Moved From a Hashtag to a Real Political Force. *Washington Post*, 19 August, 2015. The Fix. Available at: www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2015/08/19/how-black-lives-matter-moved-from-a-hashtag-to-a-real-political-force/. Accessed on:

SANTOS, C. G; OLIVEIRA, J. R. S; EL KADRI, M. S. Letramento racial crítico na construção da educação antirracista nas aulas de língua inglesa da educação básica. *Entretextos*, v. 21, n. 2, p. 153-172, 2021. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5433/1519-5392.2021v21n2p153.

SHELBY, T. Foundations of Black Solidarity: Collective Identity or Common Opression? *Ethics*, v. 112, n. 2, p. 231–266, 2002. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1086/340276.

SUBIN, N.; LIANG-ITSARA, A. Challenges for Methodological Designs and Proposed Alternative Instruction for Teaching English Grammar to Thai Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students. *English Language Teaching*, v. 15, n. 11, p. 1-70, 2022. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v15n11p70.

TELLES, E. E. *Race in Another America*: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

TRIVIÑOS, A. B. S. Introdução à pesquisa em ciências sociais. São Paulo: Atlas, 1987.

UNITED NATIONS. The 17 Goals. *Sustainable Development*, 2015. Available at: https://sdgs.un.org/goals. Accessed on: 20 May 2024.

URZÊDA FREITAS, M. T. Educando para transgredir: reflexões sobre o ensino crítico de línguas estrangeiras/inglês. *Trabalhos em Linguística Aplicada*, v. 51, n. 1, p. 77-98, 2012. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1590/S0103-18132012000100005.

VIEIRA, B. Letramento racial: da emergência de uma formulação. *Revista Espaço Acadêmico*, v. 21, p. 53-64, abr. 2022. Available at: https://periodicos.uem.br/ojs/index.php/EspacoAcademico/article/view/60366. Accessed on:

VYGOTSKY, L. S. *A formação social da mente*: o desenvolvimento dos processos psicológicos superiores. 6. ed. Trad. J. Cipolla Neto, L.S.M. Barreto; S. C. Afeche. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1998.

WEDDERBURN, C. M. *Racism Through History*: From Antiquity to Modernity. c2007. Available at: https://afrocentricidade.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/07/o-racismo-atravc3a9s-da-histc3b3ria-carlos-moore.pdf. Accessed on: 9 Sept. 2024.

History

Date of submission: 15/09/2024.
Date of approval: 12/08/20025.

Responsible Editor

Andréa Machado de Almeida Mattos, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG), Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais/MG, Brasil. Lattes: http://lattes.cnpq.br/7749222257907067, ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3190-7329, e-mail: andreamattos@ufmg.br.

Authors' Contribution

The authors declare that this text was prepared fairly and with substantial contributions from all involved. Contributions to the broader theme were made through conversations and critical readings; consequently, the writing was completed by all co-authors, with in-depth discussions leading to the development of the complete text.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

The authors hereby declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Data Availability Statement

Data is private due to ethical restrictions on participant privacy.

Use of AI

No generative artificial intelligence tools were used in the preparation of this article, including in the writing, data analysis, or editing processes. Work was conducted by the authors.

Reviews