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Thematic Dossier

Decolonial Ethics as the Compass in the University-School Relationship: A Journey Worth Undertaking

Ética decolonial como bússola na relação universidade-escola: uma jornada que vale a pena

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Abstract: Universities and schools are – unfortunately – quite often seen as two separate continents, distantly divided by a major body of water. The core argument in this paper is that, despite the unique constitutive elements of the school's and university's continents, relationships can be built between them and guided by maintaining the Decolonial Ethics as the compass, in which the consideration of the context uniqueness is key. By writing this piece, it is my intention to destabilize this binary of a two-continent mindset. Drawing from decolonial scholars worldwide and Brazilian applied linguists interested in decolonial, critical teacher language education programs, the goals of this conceptual paper are to destabilize the two-continent (schools and universities) excluding perspective by problematizing the Modern/Colonial ideologies that set them apart, as well as to reflect upon *decolonial attitudes* to be enacted with pre-service language teachers during their practicum. Examples that illustrate this ethics in the university-school relationship are interpreted as decolonial attitudes, namely: (i) the goal of school and classroom observation is to understand someone else's teaching praxis, not to freely – and sometimes baselessly – criticize it; (ii) the understanding that pre-service language teachers' presence in the school is not supposed to impose a change to its routine; they

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are there to collaborate with the school on its projects, events, and so on; and (iii) the first classes could be taught by using getting-to-know-each-other activities.

Keywords: decolonial ethics; practicum; language teachers' education program; decolonial attitudes.

Resumo: As universidades e as escolas são – infelizmente – muitas vezes vistas como dois continentes separados, distantemente divididos por uma enorme quantidade de água. O argumento central deste artigo é que, apesar dos elementos constitutivos únicos dos continentes escolar e universitário, as relações podem ser construídas entre eles e guiadas tendo a ética decolonial como bússola, em que a singularidade contextual é peça-chave. Ao escrever este artigo, pretende-se desestabilizar essa dicotomia de uma mentalidade bicontinental. Com base em estudiosas/os decoloniais e linguistas aplicadas/os brasileiras/os interessadas/os em programas críticos e decoloniais de formação de professoras/es de línguas, os objetivos deste artigo conceitual são desestabilizar a perspectiva excludente dos dois continentes (escolas e universidades), problematizando as ideologias moderno/colonial que os diferenciam, bem como refletir sobre *atitudes decoloniais* a serem adotadas com futuras/os professoras/es de línguas durante seus estágios supervisionados. Exemplos que ilustram esta ética na relação universidade-escola são interpretados aqui como *atitudes decoloniais*, a saber: (i) o objetivo da observação escolar e da sala de aula é entender a prática de ensino de outra pessoa, não criticá-la livremente – e, às vezes, sem fundamento; (ii) o entendimento de que a presença de futuras/os professoras/es de línguas na escola não deve impor uma mudança em sua rotina; elas/es estão lá para colaborar com a escola em seus projetos, eventos e etc.; e (iii) as primeiras aulas poderiam ser ministradas por meio de atividades de conhecimento mútuo.

Palavras-chave: ética decolonial; estágio; formação de professoras/es de línguas; atitudes decoloniais.

"Our project is to unsettle and disobey – not reproduce – the reign of theory over practice" (Walsh; Mignolo, 2018, p. 9).

1 From Where Shall We Depart

Universities and schools are – unfortunately – quite often seen as two separate continents, distantly divided by a major body of water. Universities are where scholars work, interact among themselves, and *produce* theories intelligible only to their peers; the land where the ivory tower is located (Buckley; Toit, 2010). Schools are where teachers work tirelessly and are the ones believed to *apply* theories. Teachers are responsible for practice over practice, endless teaching. Those who dare to navigate from one continent to another need a compass, as these waters are not often crossed, and the path is unclear. Almost seen as trailblazers, those who endure the travel perceive the structural, organizational, cultural, and epistemological differences from one continent to the other or, in other terms, from the universities to the schools instantly. Sometimes, university campuses and schools are even geographically located on the same block (Zeichner, 1998), but it feels like a life-long journey from one to the other. Catherine Walsh and Walter Mignolo's (2018, p. 9) cry makes total sense: "Our project is to unsettle and disobey – not reproduce – the reign of theory over practice." In other terms, going from one continent to another is a journey worth undertaking to find new ways of connecting them and, more importantly, connecting the people. By writing this piece, it is my intention to destabilize this binary of a two-continent mindset.

All of those who currently work as teacher-educators, especially those who supervise pre-service language teachers' practicum, were born and raised on the school continent. As a teacher-educator myself, who supervises pre-service language teacher during their practicum, when I came across the Special Issue call on "University-school relationships in language teacher education" by The Brazilian Journal of Applied Linguistics, organized by Viviane Silvestre (UEG), Mariana Mastrella-de-Andrade (UnB), Julma Vilarinho Borelli (UFR), and Barbra Sabota (UEG), I saw it as both a challenge and an opportunity to reflect on the relationships that I have been building with the pre-service language teachers and with the school where the practicum has been taking place.

In this conceptual article, the core argument is that, despite the unique constitutive elements of the school's and university's continents, relationships can be built between them and guided by Decolonial Ethics as the compass. Such an ethical perspective affords a learning-with-each-other kind of relationship, which is neither imposed nor self-beneficial, but rather both dialogical and never-ending mutually created. Egido (2022, p. 143) states: "It [ethics] is an involvement that starts from recognizing that we exist in the collective, without deteriorating our uniqueness. It is a patient, conscious, sincere, and lasting involvement." Examples that illustrate this ethics in the university-school relationship emerge from various practices, here seen as *decolonial attitudes* (Duboc, 2020),[1] which refer to small-scale, potent actions that are taken to disrupt the matrix of Coloniality. In this conceptual paper, I particularly mobilize

[1] As it will be later explained, I adopt *decolonial attitude* specifically according to Duboc's (2020) interpretation.

my reflections as a teacher-educator who supervises pre-service language teachers during their practicum in order to call for an ethical layer on the practicum. To make it clearer, my goals are to destabilize the two-continent (schools and universities) excluding perspective by problematizing the Modern/Colonial ideologies that set them apart, as well as to reflect upon *decolonial attitudes* to be enacted with pre-service language teachers during their practicum.

Before departing, a few words are needed regarding the title of this paper. Ironically, a compass points to the geographic north pole. Even though there is a scientific reason for the compass needle to point in this direction (i.e., the needle's magnetic field aligns with the earth's), one could not help but notice the – once again – indication of the North as the unquestionable orientation. Whereas a navigation compass is unequivocally adopted, I discuss another sort of compass that indicates multiple directions depending on the (ethical) principles that aim to guide the university-school relationship and that among the agents involved.

Compasses have been used for centuries, and they had a central function during the navigations that led to land theft, murders, and colonization, processes that can be traced nowadays in the Coloniality matrix. Once the colonies were independent, the colonizers' ideologies were already embedded in people's minds, which guide our ways of being, living, existing, and interacting until this day. In sum, compasses played their part on behalf of the colonizers. Here, however, I propose a reconceptualization of them, following Catherine Walsh and Walter Mignolo's (2018) advice. Based on Gordon and Gordon's (2006) writing, the scholars argue that if another world is to be built, it cannot be done using the master's tools. At some point, they need to be put aside. Let us recalibrate a compass – a compass made of Decolonial Ethics that creates a path of collaboration between universities and schools instead of a path of exploration from the former to the latter.

After these initial reflective words, I turn to a brief explanation on the notions of Coloniality of knowledge (Castro-Gómez, 2007; Ferreira; Machado, 2022; Grosfoguel, 2016; Maldonado-Torres, 2020; Mignolo, 2007, 2009; Rezende, 2019; Rezende; Gomes, 2020) and Coloniality of being (Couto; Jovino, 2022; Egido; Silva; Rosa-da-Silva, 2021; Krenak, 2020; Mignolo, 2011; Walsh, 2018). I believe both of these frequently set the tone for how the university-school relationship occurs. I then conceptualize and characterize Decolonial Ethics (Bartholomew, 2020; Egido, 2022; Maldonado-Torres, 2008; Zembylas, 2020), which will, in the following section, support the principles and *decolonial attitudes* (Duboc, 2020) I propose to be enacted with pre-service language teachers during their practicum. Finally, I landed on the same[2] continent but bearing new perspectives, creating a university-school relationship built on dialogic, mutual interaction. Hold tight; the ship is about to depart.

2 Amongst Waves and Winds: Coloniality, Modernity, and Decoloniality

Historical events (e.g., processes of colonization around the globe and the instances of genocide, exploration, slavery, and segregation) and the uneasiness caused by them led to the constitution of the Modernity/Coloniality Group, aiming at impeding colonial thought

[2] By the end of this paper and the reflections it affords, I believe that I actually do not land on the *same* continent, as my interpretations of it will be different.

and Modernity. This transdisciplinary and insurgent group, formed by Latin American thinkers, is often cited as the birthplace of the seminal reflections understood as Modernity/Coloniality/Decoloniality. For that reason, some paragraphs are dedicated to such reflections. Besides delving into these concepts and characteristics in this section, comments are made now and then, and thought-provoking questions are asked regarding their understanding of the language teacher education field.

As far as the concepts are concerned, Walter Mignolo, an Argentine semiologist (2017, p. 13), conceives Coloniality as "a 'colonial matrix or pattern of power,' which is a complex of relationships that hides behind the rhetoric of Modernity (the story of salvation, progress, and happiness) that justifies the violence of Coloniality." More than that, a distinction between Coloniality and Colonization is necessary. Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2020, p. 243) distinguishes Colonialism from Coloniality, explaining that the former refers to "a political and economic relationship in which the sovereignty of a nation or people rests on the power of another nation, which makes that nation an empire." In contrast, the latter concerns "long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism but that define culture, work, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production far beyond the strict confines of colonial administrations." Therefore, whereas the latter regards a specific historical period that has ended, the former stands for the lasting and ongoing implications of Colonization. To put it differently, even though Colonization (i.e., the possession and exploitation from one nation upon another) has formerly ended, its characteristics have changed and been sustained throughout the concept of Coloniality. One could argue, though, that no one intends to be labeled as enacting a colonial mindset; hence, this ideology is promoted by the promise behind it: if a colonial mindset is enacted, modern attributes are supposedly achieved, including development, happiness, and salvation.

The inseparable relation between Modernity and Coloniality is illustrated in Figure 1, which will be presented and discussed later. In the same vein, Alexandre Cadilhe and Henrique Leroy, Brazilian applied linguists (2020, p. 255-256), explain that, in general terms, Coloniality "[…] is the domination of one people over another in terms of ideas, subjectivities, cultures, arts, languages, genders, sexualities, beliefs, nature, and natural resources, etc." The quote by the scholars helps us better understand how the promises of development, happiness, and salvation are promoted.

To put it differently, Coloniality guides the way we live, interact, produce, and consume knowledge and goods, think, and exist. It does so by the promise of achieving something better, something out there, or something to be found under the label of Modernity. This idea will be detailed in the discussion in Figure 1. By going deeper into the reflection, it is worth noting that "we only label Modernity and Coloniality as such, that is, inseparable, because we are able, from the decoloniality standpoint, to have a critical reading of the two previous phenomena" (Egido, 2022, p. 126). In that sense, it is only possible to criticize Modernity/Coloniality because we *may* think otherwise with a decolonial lens. Let me now turn to Decoloniality.

Amongst the conceptualizations of Decoloniality, it is necessary to indicate that *it is not* "[…] a condition to be achieved in a linear sense" (Walsh, 2018, p. 81), "[…] a new paradigm or mode of critical thought" (Walsh; Mignolo, 2018, p. 5), nor "[…] an academic discipline" (Mignolo, 2018, p. 106). In terms of what *it is*, the same scholars state that it may be interpreted as "a way, option, standpoint, analytic, project, practice, and praxis" (Walsh; Mignolo, 2018, p.

5), as "[...] thought, analysis, sensing, making, doing, feeling, and being [....]" *otherwise* (Walsh, 2018, p. 100), and "as a process, practice, and project of sowing seeds; of cultivating, nurturing, and growing (Walsh, 2018, p. 100).

This political-epistemic decolonial option[3] (Domingo; Cardozo; Bretanha, 2022, p. 93) is understood by Silvio Silva Junior, Lucas Santiago, Nadja Lins, and José Silva, Brazilian applied linguists, (2022, p. 310) as "[...] characterized by the search for resistance and deconstruction of standards that reiterate colonial/capitalist/Eurocentric ideals imposed on subalternized subjects". With that in mind, scholars – myself included – have taken Decoloniality to academic investigations; however, as indicated above by Mignolo (2018, p. 106), *it is not* "[...] an academic discipline". I highlight this idea here to bear in mind that Decoloniality, as discussed in publications, academic presentations, seminars, and books, does not fully capture the magnitude of it. It is, indeed, "a process, practice, and project of sowing seeds; of cultivating, nurturing, and growing" (Walsh, 2018, p. 100). In sum, it is a way of being, living, interacting, and much more than words can capture; yet, here we are – as scholars – reading, wiring, and thinking about it in words – this is, in my viewpoint, one example of how embedded Modernity/Coloniality are on us, what we cannot (or, at least, have not been able *yet*) think about Decoloniality without using the modern/colonial tools.

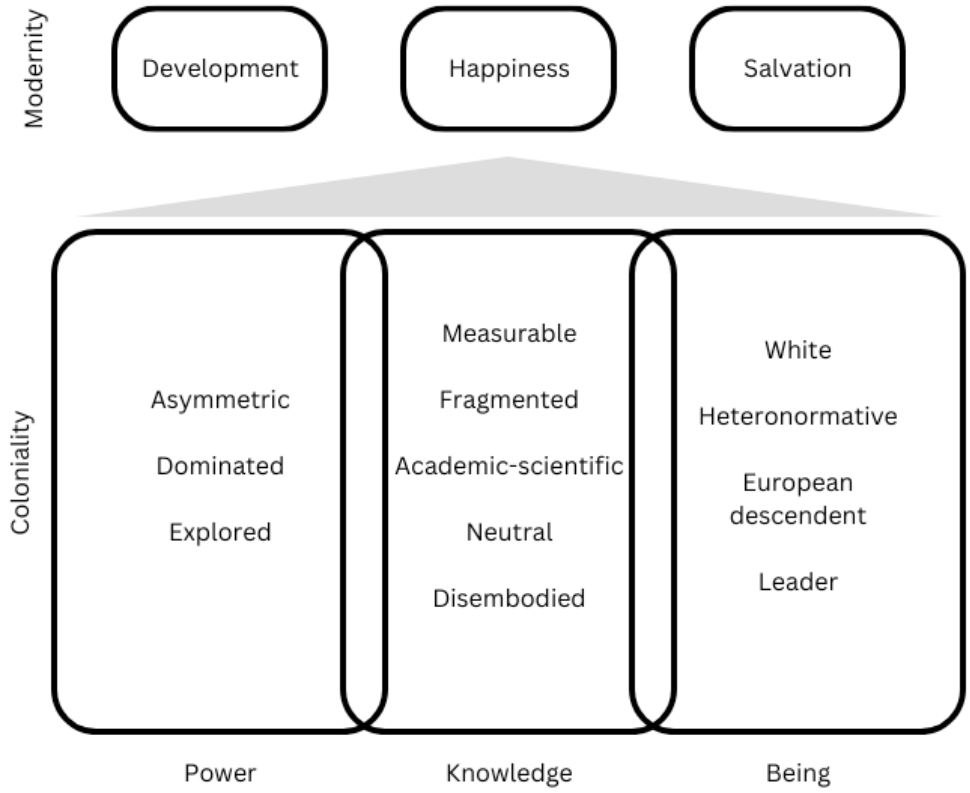
In other words, the concept of Decoloniality has served us as a lens to *identify*, *interrogate*, and potentially *interrupt*[4] instances of Modernity/Coloniality that we both witness and participate (Mignolo, 2007; 2009; 2011; 2017; 2018; Walsh, 2018; 2023). Thanks to going and expanding reflections on Modernity/Coloniality/Decoloniality, scholars have attempted to classify the types of Coloniality, the most commonly cited of which are: Power, Knowledge, and Being. These are represented in Figure 1 and later discussed. Other domains of Coloniality have also been investigated, which include, but are not limited to, the Coloniality of language (Baptista, 2022; Veronelli, 2015) and the Coloniality of gender (Lugones, 2008; Mazzaro, 2022).

Coloniality has been interpreted in three main domains: power, knowledge, and being. Although inseparable, they are often singularly discussed for a matter of understanding; this is also why I do so here, especially in Figure 1. The Coloniality of knowledge may be understood to be related to two main features. On the one hand, it interprets Global North knowledge as measurable, academic-scientific, neutral, and disembodied, whereas Global South only originates from culture and local experiences (Mignolo, 2009).

[3] Reading Robin Dunford (2017) is an opportunity to problematize Decoloniality as an *option*.

[4] These verbs were indicated by Lynn Mario Menezes de Souza, an applied linguist, in Menezes de Souza, Martinez, and Diniz de Figueiredo (2019).

Figure 1 – Colonial Constitutive Elements of Modernity



Source: Adapted and translated from Egido (2022, p. 138).

Following this line of thought, nations geopolitically located in the Global North are – almost naturally – equipped to produce disembodied knowledge that should supposedly be *applied to* Global South contexts, as these are not usually seen as capable of producing high-quality knowledge. By contrast, what is considered 'valid' knowledge from the Global North is fragmented, ranked, and submitted to the scrutiny of external criteria, then counted as academic-scientific knowledge. Consequently, when Global South research experiences seek to produce 'valid' knowledge, they usually adopt the criteria proposed and enacted in the Global North; however, what this acritical adoption fails to recognize is that the criteria are elaborated considering context-oriented aspects; hence, what is coherent in the Global North might not be adequate in the Global South.

In a similar vein, Ramón Grosfoguel (2016, p. 132), a Puerto Rican sociologist, reflects on the concept of epistemic extractivism, which

> [....] is about a mentality that does not seek dialogue that brings together horizontal conversation, equal to equal between communities and understanding indigenous knowledge in their terms, but that seeks to extract ideas as if extracting raw materials to colonize them by subsuming them within the parameters of culture and the western episteme.

In that sense, epistemic extractivism is directly related to economic extractivism when considering the former colonies, especially those that have been explooited (e.g., Brazil by the Spanish Crown). To put it differently, the Coloniality of knowledge promotes epistemic

extractivism, one being the producer and the other the consumer of 'valid' knowledge. An example of that is Global South scholars who believe research published in Global North journals – especially in English – *must* be read and cited; I argue that they *may* be read and cited when considered relevant, which is not always the case. However, the one taken as the producer feels entitled to capture someone else's reality and lived experiences and to turn that into theory. Analogously, scholars, the inhabitants of the academic continent, usually lead expeditions to the school continent to take notes on their people's habits, routines, and experiences, and generate data from them. We shall notice that this is precisely what happens most of the time in the pre-service language teachers' practicum phase. This is also characterized as epistemic extractivism (Grosfoguel, 2016), as people from the school continent hardly ever have access to research results or receive feedback on the analysis carried out on their data (Telles, 2002).

Such an asymmetrical relationship between people from the university and school continents is not solely in the knowledge domain, but it is also an indication of how one views one another. To put it differently, the academia continent – despite its most recent decades of inclusion movements in Brazil – is still very much inhabited by white, middle or upper-class, primarily male, heteronormative-performed people. It evidences the discrepancy between the beings constituting the university continent and the school one (Inep, 2022) or even the larger social fabric of Brazilian society. Both domains, knowledge and being, are inseparable when we take a closer look and realize that the connection between them refers to the Coloniality of power, which has been historically – and for the great majority of times unquestionable – asymmetric, explored, and explored.

In sum, three constitutive domains of Coloniality have been of the utmost interest in academia: Colonially of power, knowledge, and being. In my view, they are interconnected, as their vertical lines are juxtaposed in Figure 1. Each one, in its own way, propels a specific type of power, knowledge, and being as the *legitimate* one. Often, they are not questioned, but rather taken for granted, which is, to a certain extent, understandable as we, as human beings, are all born and raised embedded in a society that teaches us daily that we can only succeed (i.e., Modernity), that is, be developed, happy, and saved, if we take advantage of the opportunities, explore the natural resources, and dominate the circumstances (i.e., Coloniality of power), while also learning *from* 'valid' knowledge, which is measurable, fragmented, academic-scientific, neutral, and disembodied (i.e., Coloniality of knowledge). All of this may lead us to a *better* version of ourselves, one that is white(r), heteronormative (or, at least, perform in such a manner), of European descendent, and as a leader (i.e., Coloniality of being). Promises of Modernity/Coloniality that we shall question tirelessly.

In this discussion, it is worth reflecting upon how these mainstream domains (i.e., Colonialities of being, knowledge, and power) are enacted in the practicum phase of pre-service language teachers. Broadly speaking, when the practicum phase functions as another opportunity to reinforce asymmetrical, hierarchical relations between people and institutions, instances of Coloniality are present. When pre-service language teachers travel from the university continent to the school one looking merely for theory applications, there is an instance of Coloniality of knowledge, one in which schools are not seen as capable of creating their own bottom-up practices. Such a Coloniality understands that schools are laboratories where university-led theories are supposed to be experimented and, if they fail, place the blame on the lab.

Another instance of Coloniality refers to the being. Pre-service language teachers are perceived as citizens of the university continent who, at some point, travel to the school continent for – as more traditional teacher education programs would argue – 'theory experimentation'. Because the university continent is where 'valid' knowledge is supposedly produced, and as they are members of of that location, pre-service language teaches may see themselves as 'the knowers', those who are able to theoretically assess and make sense of what has been going on in the school continent, as if their own beings were free of assumptions, prejudice, and sometimes even discrimination.

These instances of Coloniality, each representing one domain, are afforded thanks to a colonial matrix of power, which is rooted and materialized in the Coloniality of power. Such a Coloniality not only creates room for the previous ones to occur, but it is also reinforced by them. To put it differently, when pre-service language teachers travel from the university to the school continent to extract and theoretically make sense of what happens in the schools during practicum without genuinely dialoguing with school-teachers, there we have the Coloniality of power being segmented; when pre-service language teachers go to school dearly bearing the belief that school-teachers have nothing to teach them, there we have the Coloniality of power; when school-stakeholders have suspicious looks every time both pre-service language teachers and their supervisors reach out to start a practicum initiative, there we have the Coloniality of power.

These singular instances of Coloniality, considering the practicum of pre-service language teachers, are not research-based, but are rather illustrative of how the university continent – one which is extremely modern/colonial regardless of the strides to decolonize it – usually perceive and propagate the relation between the university and the school. Luckly, we live in a time where other teacher education perspectives have gained voice. Here I am specifically considering the concept of Decoloniality and its understandings in Language Teacher Education Programs.

As an ongoing process, Decoloniality constantly invites us, teacher-educators, to question ourselves and the practices we employ in Language Teacher Education Programs. It is, however, neither a simple nor a linear task; it often makes us feel uncomfortable or uncertain at work. It is the moment when storms bring huge waves and winds that hit the ship. This analogy portrays the awareness we face when realizing our own rising within the colonial matrix of power, remembering there is no way out of it. It is a realization that we are not only a product of Modernity/Coloniality, but also producers, as we seek development, happiness, and salvation (see Figure 1). We might then wonder what is left to do if there is no way out of Modernity/Coloniality. A possible answer is to crack the system with *decolonial attitudes* (e.g., Duboc, 2020; Maldonado-Torres, 2017). Some of these *decolonial attitudes* are discussed in the section "The benefit of the Journey: A University-School Relationship *Otherwise*," in which I reflect on other ways to supervise pre-service language teachers' practicum. There, a detailed discussion is provided on Brazilian initiatives regarding Language Teacher Education Programs. Because my core argument places Decolonial Ethics as the compass to adopting this other supervision of pre-service language teachers' practicum, I first focus on Decolonial Ethics.

3 The Decolonial Ethics Compass[5]

Modernity/Coloniality is in the air we breathe, the words we speak, the gestures we perform; it is fair to say it is, unfortunately, in our bones. Hence, it is understandable that the ethics guiding us are colonial. More importantly than stating that we are generally guided by colonial ethics, it is, first and foremost, important to explain how the concept of ethics is taken here. Generally speaking, the concept of ethics is "increasingly understood as relational and reciprocal" (D'Arcy; Bender, 2023, p. 49) and seeks to judge actions as being either ethical or unethical, that is, good or bad, respectively. For such a judgment to occur, however, it is necessary to establish some criteria. Throughout history, various philosophical trends have proposed either complementary or contrasting criteria to analyze actions as ethical or unethical. Some core criteria focused on the intention behind the action itself, its immediate and lasting benefits, as well as individual and collective rights.[6] Here, it is worth mentioning that the need to judge actions as either ethical or unethical *per se* reinforces a dualist perspective, that is, in my viewpoint, modern/colonial.

Even though all these philosophical trends in ethics are possible, most are derived from the Global North and extensively studied and – sometimes unquestionably – applied in the Global South. Complementarily, they represent a specific ontoepistemological stance, which is in accordance with their proponents. In that sense, a novel philosophical trend in ethics has been much needed in relation to considering the Modernity/Coloniality discussion and its implications on the lives of so many. As a result, I now turn to the concept of Decolonial Ethics, as it has been conceived by a few scholars.

To start the discussion, allow me to recall Nelson Maldonado-Torres's words (2008, p. 53, emphasis added): "The community of masters values *an ethics of power needed to maintain alive a pathos of domination and self-control*." Subsequently, this concept of ethics seeks to maintain asymmetrical human relations, which are enacted by dominance, exploration, and slavery in all their forms. In other words, the scholar reminds us that concepts of ethics, here taken as modern/colonial (i.e., all those European-conceived), by establishing the criteria one shall adopt to judge a certain action, are, indeed, imposing an understanding of ethics. As a result, when impositions happen, local voices, bodies, stories, and desires are erased. By going deeper into the reflection, he also explains that:

> *The colonial world*, which includes the imperial project, is the *anti-ethical par excellence*. It is a world where the allegedly extraordinary event of anticipating one's own death cannot be achieved, not because the individual is lost in an anonymous 'mass'but simply because death (the death of the slave or the indigenous population, for instance) is already part and parcel of ordinary life. (Maldonado-Torres, 2008, p. 100, emphasis added).

Nelson Maldonado-Torres's (2008) account of the banalization of death – in its various forms – is a result of the colonial world that "anti-ethical par excellence" needs to be contextualized. Two reflections are relevant here. First, it is important to note that the scholar

[5] My interest for (decolonial) ethics in language education emerged during my Ph.D. study (Egido, 2022).

[6] For a detailed discussion of the philosophical trends in ethics, I suggest the reading of Egido (2022).

interprets it as anti-ethical from a decolonial perspective, whereas the same banalization of death finds its ethical support in particular European-based perspectives (e.g., the utilitarian). Second, the scholar's standpoint on the idea of death already being part of ordinary life relates directly to the modern/colonial world, which constitutes all beings. Here, again, I see a dualist viewpoint as it considers actions simply as ethical or unethical. In my interpretation, Decolonial Ethics invites us all to be more open to a-linear, non-hierarchical criteria.

Going further into this discussion and translating this reflection to the language education realm, as teacher-educators, we may understand the lack of school infrastructure and financial incentive, the discredit of language teachers, and the baseless education policy changes[7] as "anti-ethical par excellence", echoing Nelson Maldonado-Torres's words (2008). Complementarily, when language students do not have access to quality education due to the ZIP code where they come from, we may wonder whether their aspirational dreams for life have not already been eliminated, here referring to the scholars' idea of death – in this case of one's dreams – as part of one's ordinary life. In an unequal country such as Brazil, who is granted the right to dream about a future achieved through education?

Hence, as there is no way out of Modernity/Coloniality, we seem to be left only with the possibility of cracking the system, which some scholars have called *decolonial attitudes* (e.g., Duboc, 2020; Maldonado-Torres, 2017). On that note, I believe it is also worth noting that my understanding of Decoloniality neither calls for nor waits for the destruction of the institutions (e.g., the university and the school) as we currently know them to be rebuilt from a decolonial standpoint. Such destruction, followed by the construction of new institutions, seems nearly impossible, as we are human beings born and raised in Modernity/Coloniality; it might be a dream to be fulfilled by the next generation, as reflected upon by Tânia Rezende (Rezende et al., 2020). Consequently, we are left with the option to benefit from those institutions' *grietas* (Walsh, 2023) to act towards a more decolonial perspective.

Envisioning and enacting *decolonial attitudes* in the relation between university and school permeate the interruption of actions, ideas, and interactions that are seen as "anti-ethical par excellence" (Maldonado-Torres, 2008). To reinforce the core idea of this paper, it is argued that a Decolonial Ethics shall serve as the compass to orient this new, ethical relation between these two institutions. For that reason, it is necessary to dive into the concept of Decolonial Ethics.

"The challenge of creating an ethics that can be understood as decolonial lies precisely in the need to conceive it according to a logic different from that by which other ethical perspectives have been proposed" (Egido, 2022, p. 139). In this vein, it does not seem coherent to collectively elaborate Decolonial Ethics by adopting the criteria historically orienting European-based ethics perspectives. Some of these criteria, for instance, refer to the greater good, the lesser damage, and the long-lasting impact.[8] However, as Michalinos Zembylas (2020, p. 3) points out:

> decolonial ethics [, on the other hand,] imagines a set of ethical orientations that confront conventional assumptions about culture and history and challenge

[7] Issues extensively discussed by Brazilian applied linguists and nicely situated by Julia Borelli, Viviane Silvestre, and Rosane Pessoa (2020).

[8] For a detailed discussion of European-based ethics perspectives with language classroom examples, I suggest reading the chapter "Por uma educação linguística violenta" by Egido (2022).

> the normally uninterrogated consequences of coloniality and Eurocentrism in disciplinary discourses and practices. In this sense, the task of developing decolonial ethics is essentially a project of unworking the ethics of coloniality and Eurocentrism within disciplines.

Within the contours of such a line of thought, Jake Bartholomew (2020, p. 103) argues that "if decolonial thought is to have an ethics, it must listen to this cry, and must act accordingly. This would mean fulfilling the demands that are uncovered when one seeks to think and act decolonially, which means recognizing just how much it in fact is a challenge". In other words, Decolonial Ethics refers to listening to historically marginalized groups' cries and establishing locally-sensitive relations with them, and not simply applying top-down ethical parameters, as proposed by most European-based concepts. In a decolonial, ethical relation between university and school, it means students-teachers and teacher-educators, working as practicum supervisors, adopting a humble stance and listening to in-service teachers and their students cries, that is, asking what they expect from us, 'those from academia', instead of imposing our practicum discipline agenda on them; just to cite an example, whereas others will be provided in depth in the following section.

To put it briefly, I have indicated and brought to the discussion authors who not only reveal the challenge of creating such ethics, but who also alert that it has to be taken as a challenge in itself. There is not – and there cannot be – a fixed concept of Decolonial Ethics, as the other ethics perspectives have; it shall not employ European-based lines of thought when proposing such Decolonial Ethics. The endeavor, in sum, relies primarily on finding new ways to propose sustainable concepts of such ethics.

By going deeper into the reflection, I now turn to what Decolonial Ethics *may* be, according to some authors. The modal verb is of paramount importance here as the concept of such a type of ethics shall not be read as conclusive in itself. In Jake Bartholomew's (2020, p. 94) terms, it is:

> ethics as a way of life, one which challenges not with mere argument but with the extremes of rhetoric in the form of polemic, with manifestoes and the founding of political parties which served as mouthpieces of his thought, and with the founding of publishing houses for his work which would not meet the standards of any typical publisher. If this does not look like ethics, this is precisely because it does not follow the formal structure that European theoretical philosophy demands in general and which ethics, in particular, has made its own.

Jake Bartholomew (2020) alerts us that it should not be surprising if one does not see Decolonial Ethics as an ethics perspective. The reason for that relies on the biased understanding one hears of what has been commonly comprehended as ethics. By going more profound in the reflection, it is necessary to free ourselves from European-based criteria that have determined what counts as ethics (e.g., the utilitarian, that, in general terms, aims to maximize the benefits regardless of the minority's enduring consequences), hence locally creating our own reflections leading to a context-dependent Decolonial Ethics concept.

As one expects, Jake Bartholomew's (2020) understanding that Decolonial Ethics is one that celebrates life in its plurality, knowledge in the plural form, relationships in the horizontal manner, differently from the anti-ethical colonial world as depicted by Nelson

Maldonado-Torres (2008). Such viewpoints, however, relate to a broad take on Decolonial Ethics; hence, it is still necessary to interpret it to the language education field, and especially to the relationships between university and school that exist thanks to the practicum of pre-service language teachers.

By doing so, drawing from Brazilian language education, I have argued that Decolonial Ethics:

> […] is not about an involvement imposed by third parties or from which we will have any bonus or burden; *It is an involvement that starts from the recognition that we exist in the collective without deteriorating our uniqueness. It is a patient, conscious, sincere, and lasting involvement* (Egido, 2022, p. 143, emphasis added).

To put it in other terms, Decolonial Ethics is patient in the sense that it takes time to be nurtured among the peoples from both continents, not imposed; it is conscious because it requires the continents' peoples to constantly reflect on their own actions in terms of their motives and consequences, not taking for granting that everything is ethical; it is sincere as one needs to be open to the other regarding the motives leading their actions; finally, it demands a lasting involvement among the continents' peoples, mutually beneficial.

Given the above, I argue that Decolonial Ethics call our attention, as university and school stakeholders, to call out oppressions, abuses, and baseless judgements enacted in each and both continents. It invites us all, teacher-educators, to feel responsible for a renewed parameter of relations, one that is respectful to people's potential, knowledge, lived experiences, and needs. Such a responsibility requires us to frequently detach ourselves from the hours spent in university offices and actually spend time in the schools with the teacher-students, learning with them. We cannot expect a decolonial teacher education if we keep the *modus operandi* of a practicum phase that seems to last forever.[9]

Moreover, a decolonial concept of ethics is enough to guide the practices enacted in the practicum phase of pre-service language teacher education. In that sense, it is worth recalling Alexandre Cadilhe and Henrique Leroy's (2020, p. 259, emphasis added) thought when stating that:

> in a social world marked by inequalities, violence, and oppression reflected in the various colonialities, it becomes an *ethical duty* not to reduce language education to an exclusive space for practices focused on linguistic reading, production, and analysis that are unrelated to social problems.

It is an ethical imperative – in the authors' words – to come up with other practices related to language education, which shall take into consideration "a social world marked by inequalities, violence and oppression reflected in the various colonialities" (Cadilhe; Leroy, 2020, p. 259). The authors' quote is here brought to justify the shift of ethical posture commented on the previous paragraphs in this section. In sum, a change in language education is led by a new, decolonial concept of ethics. Bearing in mind this logic, in the following section, I refer to and reflect on practices, that is, *decolonial attitudes* (Duboc, 2020), that may be employed during the practicum phase of pre-service language teacher education as illustrative of such ethics.

[9] In the following section, I comment on a few practicum *attitudes* that are in line with the decolonial perspective.

4 The Benefit of the Journey: A University-School Relationship *Otherwise*

There is an unprecedented amount of research on Decoloniality and Language Education conducted by Brazilian applied linguists, ranging from analysis and production of didactic material adopted in elementary and high school contexts (Domingo; Cardozo; Bretanha, 2022; Kabongo, 2022; Martins; Oliveira; Souza, 2022; Oliveira; Fraguas; Mariano, 2022; Vasconcelos, 2021) to teachers' praxes (Gualhano; Conegundes; Sampaio, 2020; Silva Junior et al., 2022), just to mention a few. The relevance of these foci is undoubted; mine, however, relies on the university-school relationship that is materialized, especially during the practicum. Then, in the following paragraphs, I turn to applied linguists' decolonial studies to problematize the (more) often (than we would like to admit) asymmetrical, distant, and suspicious university-school relationship, which most of the time happens during the pre-service language teachers' practicum.

As in most academic practicum disciplines, in general, the pre-service language teachers were supposed to attend supervising meetings with me for discussions, observe classes taught by the school-teacher, and then teach some classes themselves. However, often, an uneasiness hit teacher-educators with questions similar to those Professor Alexandre Cadilhe had asked himself: "Would these actions either be adequate or enough for the pre-service teachers' professional education? How could we think other (academic literacy) actions that were not the dominant ones?" (Cadilhe; Leroy, 2020, p. 253).

During such a process of practicum supervision, teacher-educators are often aware that "academically, we still organize ourselves on a Eurocentric basis and we are imposing this organization on a larger group and, in a broader and more consistent way, on society in general" (Couto; Jovino, 2022, p. 77). The awareness that their supervising practices would be unquestionably modern/colonial may motivate them to think and act decolonially whenever and wherever possible.

In the Brazilian scenario, some experiences (Mastrella-de-Andrade, 2020; Rosa-da-Silva, 2021a; 2021b; Urzêda-Freitas; Borelli, 2022; Silvestre; Sabota; Pereira, 2025) are illustrative of this shift from a modern/colonial to a more decolonial experience during practicum. As Mastrella-de-Andrade (2020) introduces the reader to her edited book, she reminds them that "[b]reaking away from an education centered exclusively around university is not something that happens suddenly, much less once and for all" (p. 13). As teacher language education is an ongoing process that requires a constant and attentive look on bringing school and society as fundamental components of this education, Mastrella-de-Andrade's (2020, p. 15) book "[…] points to the school as a formative space par excellence, committing to the idea that there is no education without the educational community – teachers, students, managers, parents and guardians." In sum, the publication welcomes research experiences that result from a more symmetrical, decolonial university-school relationship, included, but not limited to, the practicum phase.

Moving precisely to language teachers' practicum and reporting on her Ph.D. research in a co-authored piece, Borelli (Urzêda-Freitas; Borelli, 2022) recalls that her "education was always full of encounters" (p. 149), which led her to value others' experiences and their impact on herself as a person and her professional path later as a practicum supervisor. In

the doctoral investigation, she broadly sought to "problematize a hierarchical education and a practicum that segregates knowledge, people, and spaces" (p. 149). An example of *decolonial attitude* enacted by the researcher is her commitment to, which was accomplished, write her dissertation "[…] with knowledge that was shared with [her] in conversations with English language teachers conducting their practicum from different universities, with public school teachers […], and with undergraduate teachers who were in the final year of their undergraduate degree" (p. 150). Besides the brilliant bottom-up knowledge collective construction deriving from the encounter of various stakeholders, Borelli also indicates her decision to not divide up the dissertation chapters between theoretical and practical/analytical; in her view, it was very much needed to de-hierarchize knowledge, a colonially duality sustaining university *versus* school, researchers *versus* teachers, theory *versus* practice; when, in fact, it shall be a relationship of communion, sharing, and mutual commitment, as Borelli's dissertation points out.

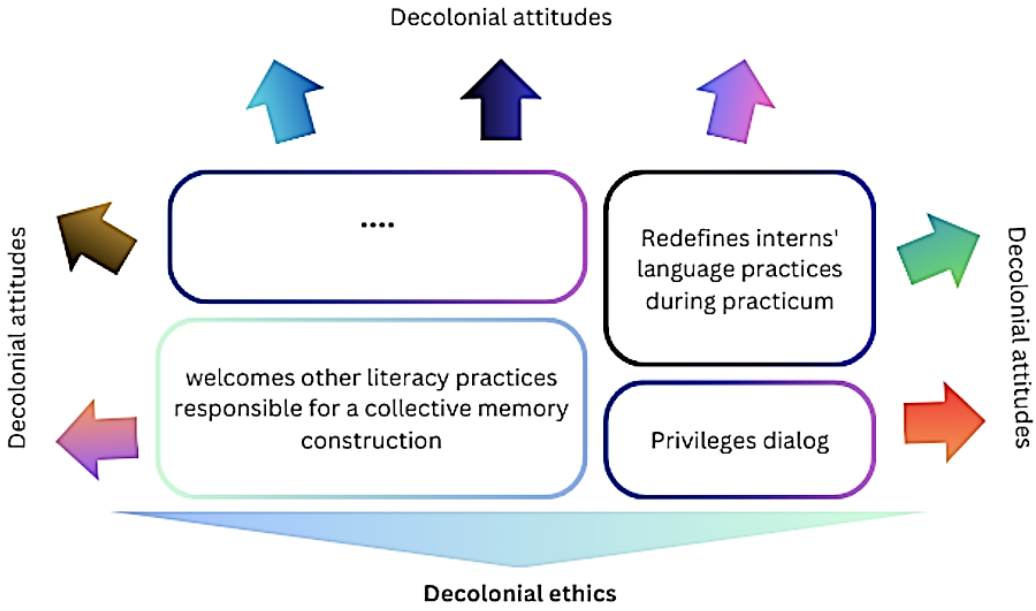
Rosa-da-Silva (2021b) also investigates her professional context, which is the supervision of pre-service language teachers' practicum phase. By problematizing the frequently distant university-school relationship, she argues that practicum is a key moment to promote "[…] more circular relationships with agents of public education schools, the point of arrival and departure of our teacher education courses." (s/p) Such relationships, as she states, are neither continuous nor taken for granted, but local and contingent to contextual factors. Deriving from the decolonial perspective, the author also discusses the physical and ontoepistemological movement from the solely university continent to the school one.

In broader terms, language teacher education happens "in dialogue, in encounter, in conversation, in collaboration, in partnership, in conflict, in confrontation, in back and forth, in constant alternation," and so does the practicum phase that all pre-service teachers go through (Mastrella-de-Andrade, 2020, p. 13). Once we understand the practicum as a moment of dialog between the school and university people, the former shall not be merely seen as a physical place where pre-service language teachers must fulfill their normal 400-hour practicum. It shall be taken as "an education space par excellence, committing to the idea that there is no education without the educational community – teachers, students, managers, fathers, mothers and guardians" (Mastrella-de-Andrade, 2020, p. 15). School is not a place where pre-service language teachers *apply* what they have learned in theory on campus, but rather a genuine place where their teacher education continues and other meaningful learnings happen.

From a decolonial perspective, Alexandre Cadilhe and Henrique Leroy (2020) propose three principles that may be employed during the supervision of pre-service language teachers, namely: practicum as a phase that (i) privileges dialog, (ii) welcomes other literacy practices responsible for a collective memory construction, and (iii) redefines interns' language practices during practicum. In detail, on the first one, the authors suggest that "[…] the practicum must be a place, in the course curriculum, that privileges dialogue and attentive listening to the voices of interns" (p. 264). On the second one, they argue that, despite the colonizing and colonized role of academia, there are needs other than literacies that value "a collective memory about life in the classroom, valuing narratives of (re)existence in the face of the colonialities of being and knowledge" (p. 265). On the third one, they allude to "the redefinition of language practices in language classes in the interns' conducting projects" (p. 265).

Figure 2 represents my argument that the practicum principles proposed by Cadilhe and Leroy (2020) are sustained by a redefinition of how we relate to each other, leading to another ethics perspective, Decolonial Ethics. Moreover, it is important to note that principles need to be enacted, which happens through *decolonial attitudes*, as indicated in Figure 2. A principle may inspire more than one *decolonial attitude* and vice-versa. Besides that, by taking a closer look at Figure 2, the grounding is constituted by Decolonial Ethics, which supports the three principles related to practicum, as proposed by Cadilhe and Leroy (2020); however, a fourth cell was added to indicate that other principles are equally welcome, because these three proposed shall be read as contingent and a reflection of the authors' personal and local experiences with practicum. In my understanding, such principles lead to small-scale, context-dependent *decolonial attitudes*, which, in turn, may have multiple formats, colors, directions, goals, and outcomes, emphasizing the plurality welcomed in *decolonial studies*.

Figure 2 – Decolonial Ethics sustaining practicum principles, which lead to *decolonial attitudes*



Source: the author.

In the following paragraphs, I indicate and comment on a few *attitudes* (Duboc, 2020) that I believe to be possibly taken as decolonial. As pointed out in the previous paragraph, one principle may inspire more than one *decolonial attitude*, and vice-versa, which is why I neither relate to nor try to directly match each *decolonial attitude* to one or more principle(s) by Cadilhe and Leroy (2020). Let's turn to such *attitudes*.

School and classroom observation is one of the first practices that pre-service language teachers are expected to perform from an early practicum phase. What worries many teacher-educators from the very beginning is how the pre-service language teachers may interpret from the school-teacher's praxis. It leads to one of the *decolonial attitudes*, which is to comprehend that the goal of school and classroom observation is to *understand* someone else's teaching praxis, not to freely – and sometimes baselessly – *criticize* it. One good piece of advice regarding to how enact this *decolonial attitude* is to write observation reports, bearing

in mind that they could be shared with the school teacher being observed. Consequently, a fair question to ask student-teachers is: How would you feel if you were the school-teachers reading what you wrote about them?

This *decolonial attitude* of not only writing or baseless criticism, but promoting reflection based on someone else's praxis does not mean the teaching practice is not open to criticism, but rather it comes from the consideration that "teaching is [also] open to possibilities, contingent, and context-dependent" (Mastrella-de-Andrade; Pessoa, 2019, p. 11). In that sense, every criticism shall consider what has led the school teacher to perform the practice judged to be inappropriate by someone else. Some thought-provoking questions teacher-educators may ask the pre-service language teachers whenever they recount the school teacher's performance are: Why do you think they did it? What perspective of education/language/teaching/learning is supporting it? Based on their context, would/could they do it differently? How would you do it?

With such an *attitude*, teacher-educators aim to minimally deconstruct the modern/colonial academic mentality that nurtures the pre-service language teachers that, as members of the academia, they are supposed to go to school to judge someone else's work. This unfortunate mentality resonates with Ramón Grosfoguel's (2016, p. 134) words: "The people of the global South [analogously, the school teacher] limit themselves to producing inputs, experiences that are then appropriated in the North [analogously, the pre-service language teachers] and returned as elaborate theories." This Coloniality of knowledge may be interrupted when the latter sees the former as a partner, as someone with whom to learn *with* and not *from*.[10]

Another *attitude* teacher-educators may incorporate from the beginning of group meetings with the pre-service language teachers is the understanding that their presence in the school is not supposed to impose a change to its routine; they are there to collaborate with the school on its projects, events, etc. Once the school context is taken as legitimate, the pre-service language teachers' role is to dive into its routine and live the school's daily life as everybody else does. It is important to note that, regardless of who the newcomer is, the context and its members (i.e., the school teachers, the students, the principal, and other school-based members) will inevitably change at least a bit; feelings of curiosity, shyness, and motivation emerge. In that sense, school teachers and their students, as well as other school agents, will undoubtedly behave somehow differently as the pre-service language teachers arrive and stay there.

In that sense, an ethical posture is expected from the pre-service language teachers regarding respect for everybody else's lives and presence in the school. As they arrive there and start interacting with its people, the pre-service language teachers cannot invalidate people's identities, roles, and knowledge. Following this line of thought, Ramón Grosfoguel explains (2016, p. 140, emphasis added), "if ecologycide destroys life, *epistemicide and existentialicide*[11] *consists in destroying knowledge and forms of life associated with artifacts, knowledge and objects extracted to assimilate them into western capitalist culture and ways of being and existence*." If we cannot separate the knower from the knowledge, we shall not invalidate school-teachers' and students' knowledge and experiences; otherwise, it leads to an attempt to erase their

[10] Silva (2025) is a suggested reading for those interested in research conducted in schools *with* teachers.

[11] In Spanish, ecologicidio, epistemicidio, and *existencialicidio*.

identities. Instead of invalidating them, we should validate them under their own terms, not the academic ones.

Another *attitude* that may be implemented stems from the idea that teaching starts by identifying students' "desires, needs, and realities" (Mastrella-de-Andrade; Pessoa, 2019, p. 9) and not by pre-selective grammar topics. Consequently, the first classes may be taught by using getting-to-know-each-other activities. In one of these, students can be invited to tell their personal stories and explain why they are studying in that specific school, during that precise class time. This *attitude*, which leads to adopting a specific type of task, values not only students' "desires, needs, and realities" but also likely changes the concept of teaching from colonial to decolonial. Bearing in mind, as Mariana Mastrella-de-Andrade and Rosane Pessoa (2019, p. 9) state, that:

> [teaching] is colonial [...] [when] learners are textually and rationally known beforehand. This means dismissing the need to know the students, their desires, needs, and realities to teach them; it means adopting a homogeneous, know-it-all epistemology on language teaching and learning.

In other words, as teacher-educators, we should not dictate beforehand how a class will be taught without getting to know students. Following Mariana Mastrella-de-Andrade and Rosane Pessoa's (2019, p. 17) advice: "local places must have a say in their teaching and learning processes as equally valid knowledge." In that sense, an ethical compass guiding language education during practicum requires student-teachers not to arrive in schools with everything planned without first getting to know the context and, most importantly, the students.

By presenting and commenting on a few possible *decolonial attitudes* that may be adopted during the supervising of the pre-service language teachers' practicum, I have argued that dismantling Colonialities of knowledge and being guided by Decolonial Ethics are greatly needed activities. Considering we cannot separate the knower from the knowledge, for pre-service language teachers to take school teachers and their students seriously, they first need to recognize their value as human beings, and the former as legitimate professionals who do the best they can with the conditions offered. Hence, the school teachers' praxes are coherently guided by their context possibilities, formal education, and students' "desires, needs, and realities" (Mastrella-de-Andrade; Pessoa, 2019, p. 9) and not by something that happens to happen for no apparent reason. We are discussing ontological and epistemological validations, potentially leading to a more cyclic, dialogic university-school relationship during the practicum phase.

It is important to note that, considering that there is no way out of Modernity/Coloniality, as argued in the second section of this paper, the suggested *decolonial attitudes* discussed in this section should not be read as absolutely effective when it comes to promoting a decolonial language education. They too can fail, and there is no way out of this fact. However, it does not erase the need to think and act in a decolonial manner. Circling back to the school-university-continent journey, such *decolonial attitudes* may be adopted as tools and lenses by teacher-educators and pre-service language teachers to visit the school continent and learn *with* their citizens.

In sum, a Decolonial Ethics teaches us, teacher-educators, as well as our students that an ethical language education promoted during the practicum phase has nothing to do with simply fulfilling institutional requirements and achieving others' expectations regarding what to do. This perspective of ethics invites us all to consider Decoloniality as a perspective to promote an inclusive, equitable, and more humane language education; one that starts and ends considering public school students "desires, needs, and realities" (Mastrella-de-Andrade; Pessoa, 2019, p. 9). It fundamentally concerns an ethics of care, regardless of one's gender, race, social status, and political and religious affiliations.

5 Where We Land

Navigating these waters, from the university to the school continent, is not a simple endeavor. As I have argued in this paper, the journey is often guided by a modern/colonial compass, one according to which asymmetrical relationships are reinforced, epistemic extractivism is carried out, and school continent's people are frequently subjected to academia's interpretation. We, teacher-educators, must be aware that the analogy I have created and sustained throughout this paper represents a modern/colonial perspective on the university-school relationship. By separating them in terms of continents, I aimed to criticize the long-lasting symmetrical relationship between them. However, this does not erase unique and local-oriented experiences we have access to in applied linguistics publications in Brazil (e.g., Cadilhe; Leroy, 2020; Mastrella-de-Andrade, 2020; Rosa-da-Silva, 2021a; 2021b; Silvestre; Sabota; Pereira, 2025, among others).

The analogy I have created and developed here concerns a navigation compass used on the trip from the university continent to the school continent. What I have proposed is a *decolonial ethics* (Bartholomew, 2020; Egido, 2022; Maldonado-Torres, 2008; Zembylas, 2020) compass, one that creates a path of collaboration between universities and schools rather than a path of exploration from the former to the latter. To put it differently, it is a compass that indicates multiple directions depending on the (ethical) principles necessary to guide the university-school relationship and that among the stakeholders involved. In addition to the multiple-direction aspect, such a compass questions the aimed directions, but further discussions related to the constructions of the maps themselves are still needed.

Examples illustrating these ethics in the university-school relationship emerge from various practices, seen as *decolonial attitudes* (e.g., Duboc, 2020; Maldonado-Torres, 2017). I took into account the work by Alexandre Cadilhe and Henrique Leroy (2020), who proposed three principles that may be employed during the supervision of pre-service language teachers, namely: practicum as a phase that (i) privileges dialog, (ii) welcomes other literacy practices responsible for a collective memory construction, and (iii) redefines interns' language practices during practicum. In my point of view, these principles are sustained by a Decolonial Ethics (Bartholomew, 2020; D'Arcy; Bender, 2023; Egido, 2022; Maldonado-Torres, 2008; Zembylas, 2020).

Such a perspective of ethics, besides distancing itself from prescriptive, European-oriented ethics interpretations, welcomes people's ontoepistemological views in order to ethically respond to contextually emergent situations. Taking this ethics guidance into language education requires an in-depth knowledge of one's educational context. Translating

this idea to the university-school relationship, especially during the practicum phase, we have realized that, to a great extent, this relationship is prescribed and asymmetrical; student-teachers worry too much about documents and often seem to forget the purpose of this phase itself, that is, experience the school and learn *with* the in-service teachers and their respective students. For this perspective of ethics to be enacted, the aforementioned principles set forth by Alexandre Cadilhe and Henrique Leroy (2020) guide the following *decolonial attitudes*.

As far as the *decolonial attitudes* are concerned, I report on three, namely: (1) the goal of school and classroom observation was to *understand* someone else's teaching praxis, not to freely – and sometimes baselessly – *criticize* it; (2) the presence of the pre-service language teachers in the school was not supposed to impose a change to its routine; and (3) the teaching starts with identifying students' "desires, needs, and realities," and not by pre-selective grammar topics. Such *decolonial attitudes*, in my understanding, contribute to a dismantling of the Colonialities of being and knowledge as they value other people's existence, identity, and knowledge as equally valid regardless of their origin. However, as indicated in the previous section, they should not be read as a save-the-world approach, as there is no way out of Coloniality. Attempts must be made and benefits identified from the consideration of this decolonial perspective in language teacher education programs around the country (e.g., Mastrella-de-Andrade, 2020; Rosa-da-Silva, 2021a; 2021b; Urzêda-Freitas; Borelli, 2022).

Finally, as we adopt a Decolonial Ethics compass to navigate and better connect the university and school continents – which, hopefully, will not be seen as two geographically and ideologically separate portions of lands – we hope "to unsettle and disobey – not reproduce – the reign of theory over practice" (Walsh; Mignolo, 2018, p. 9). This should serve as the ultimate goal to promote a more humane, just, and loving university-school relationship. The waters may not always be calm, but the journey is definitely worth the undertaking.

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The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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The data used to write this paper were mostly open-access articles, except for some published in international journals.

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The author declares that AI was not used in this paper.

Reviews

As part of the commitment made by the Brazilian Journal of Applied Linguistics to Open Science, the journal publishes the reviews issued regarding its published works, when authorized by all parties involved.

Review 1

Round 1

Embora o texto seja muito bem escrito, ainda carece de revisão final a fim de adequar-se às normas de formatação da revista.

O resumo precisa ser reescrito a fim de trazer mais informações sobre a poposta do artigo que se apresenta. O objetivo deve aparecer de modo mais explícito de modo a auxiliar na leitura do artugo e acompanhar o desenrolar da metáfora estabelecida. Algumas das ponderações são apresentadas ao longo da leitura de modo a provocar o/a autor/a a repensar algmas das afirmações feitas. Uma vez que o texto se apresenta como uma revisão de literatura e problematização a partir de questões teóricas, supõe-se que o diálogo promovido durante a emissão do parecer seja oportuno.

Espera-se que após a revisão o texto ofereça importante contribuição ao que se entende por ética decolonial e suas implicações na relação universidadescola.

Reviewed on: 22/03/2025.
Recommendation: Revisions Required.

Reviewer: Barbra do Rosário Sabota Silva.

Round 2

The present version of the text is much more consistent and related to the discussions in the special issue. So, it is relevant to applied linguists to access this discussion. It needs, however, a final review for accuracy and clarity. I have pointed out some parts where a minor change in wording would make a difference in comprehension.

Reviewed on: 11/08/2025.
Recommendation: Accept Submission.

Reviewer: Barbra do Rosário Sabota Silva.

Review 2

Round 1

This conceptual article offers a thought-provoking and original discussion on the role of decolonial ethics in shaping the relationship between universities and schools, with particular focus on the practicum phase in language teacher education. Drawing from the Modernity/Coloniality/Decoloniality framework and engaging with both international and Brazilian scholarship in Applied Linguistics, the author presents a well-articulated critique of the enduring colonial structures within education. The metaphor of universities and schools as "two continents" captures the epistemological and ontological gaps that often characterize this relationship. By proposing decolonial ethics as a compass and outlining practical attitudes to be adopted during practicum supervision, the author highlights ways to reconfigure this relationship toward more dialogical, equitable, and context-sensitive practices. The manuscript brings important contributions to the field of critical applied linguistics and teacher education.
That said, I suggest the following points be addressed in revision:
Clarify the source of the term "decolonial attitude", which appears central to the manuscript. A more explicit reference to Duboc (2020) is recommended, particularly at first mention.
Revisit the opening paragraph, which reiterates a conventional division between university as the space of theory and school as the space of practice. It would be helpful to make clearer how the journey proposed throughout the paper actually challenges and potentially destabilizes this binary.
Once these aspects are addressed, I believe the manuscript will be ready for publication in RBLA.

Reviewed on: 06/08/2025.
Recommendation: Revisions Required.

Round 2

Having reviewed the revised manuscript, I conclude that the author has met the requirements outlined in the previous review. The changes implemented have strengthened the manuscript, rendering it appropriate for publication.
Accordingly, I recommend its acceptance for publication.

Reviewed on: 11/08/2025.
Recommendation: Accept Submission.