

USANDO AS FERRAMENTAS DO MESTRE PARA DESMANTELAR A CASA GRANDE:

A ambivalência da educação e os docentes negros de Língua Inglesa no Brasil

USING THE MASTER’S TOOL TO DISMANTLE THE MASTER’S HOUSE¹:

The two-ness in the construction of black English teachers’ identity in Brazil

UTILIZAR LA HERRAMIENTA DEL MAESTRO PARA DESMONTAR LA CASA DEL MAESTRO:

El dos nes en la construcción de la identidad de los profesores negros de Inglés en Brasil

Letícia Fernanda Carvalho Silva

Graduanda em Letras pela Universidade Federal de Lavras. Participante do Grupo de Estudos Amefricanos Zacimba Gaba (GEAZ) – leticia.silva9@estudante.ufla.br

Gasperim Ramalho de Souza

Professor do Departamento de Estudos da Linguagem/UFLA. Participante do Grupo de Estudos Amefricanos Zacimba Gaba (GEAZ) - gasperim.souza@ufla.br

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Resumo

Este trabalho tem por escopo uma reflexão crítica sobre o sistema educacional brasileiro, pautado na supremacia branca e seus desdobramentos para a dualidade da identidade dos professores negros de língua inglesa no Brasil. No entanto, enfatizamos neste artigo a importância de uma educação crítica que subverta as relações de poder impostas pela casa grande, que era a única detentora do direito à educação. Dessa forma, a educação crítica possibilita que professores de inglês no Brasil desmontem a casa grande valorizando sua identidade racial e de seus alunos diante da língua inglesa como *língua franca* na atualidade.

Palavras-chave: Casa Grande, Identidade, Professores Negros de Inglês, Educação Crítica.

Abstract

This work aims to promote a critical reflection on the Brazilian educational system, based on white supremacy and its implication for the two-ness in the identity of black English teachers in Brazil. Therefore, in this essay, we emphasize the importance of a critical education that subverts the power relations imposed by the master’s house, which was the only holder of the right to education. In this way, critical education allows English teachers in Brazil to dismantle the master’s house, valuing their racial identity and that of their students in the face of English as a *Lingua franca* today.

Palavras-chave: The master’s house, Black English teachers, Critical Education.

Resumen

El presente trabajo tiene como objetivo una reflexión crítica sobre el sistema educativo brasileño, basado en la supremacía blanca y sus consecuencias para la identidad dual de los profesores negros de habla inglesa en Brasil. Sin embargo, en este artículo destacamos la importancia de una educación crítica que subvierte las relaciones de

¹ The title makes an allusion to Audre Lorde’s phrase: “For the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.”

poder impuestas por la casa grande, que era la única titular del derecho a la educación. De esta manera, la educación crítica permite a los profesores de inglés en Brasil dismantelar la casa grande, valorando su identidad racial y la de sus alumnos frente al inglés como lengua franca hoy.

Palabras Clave: La casa del maestro, Profesores de inglés negros, Educación crítica.

Introduction: Understanding race in Brazil and resisting to the whitening process

“Without a Negro past, without a Negro future, it was impossible to me to live my Negrohood”

Fanon (1952,p.264)

The inherent problematic to the construction of the identity of Afro-Brazilian people is a central topic to the field of race studies in Brazil. That said, it is important to clarify that, in this work, we understand race, in line with Jorge (2012, p.81), as a social construction “used to inform how some phenotypical characteristics of the individual, such as skin color and hair texture, influence, interfere with, and even determine the social places and fortunes of individuals within the Brazilian society”. The complexity in the construction of the black Brazilians identity can be explained by the dehumanizing and lasting system of enslavement which built and perpetuated the former colony ideologies and stereotypes of black people. Moreover, the strong process of whitening the population, fostered by the rape of black women and politics of receiving European immigrants, to create a civilized society embodies another factor to be considered in order to understand the intricacy of the complexion identification in the mentioned country. In this realm, *mestizaje*, a mix of races, transiting between the scar and the solution for the nation’s blackness erasure, configured one of the tools to vanish the land and, at the same time, a veil that precluded the addressing of racism: the racial democracy myth.

As pointed out by Silva (2008, p.32), if, on the one hand, national scientists, inspired by Europeans race theories, demonized race mixing and believed that “racial mixing was a process that would lead to the weakening of civilizations and the degeneration of future generations.”. Brazilian intellectuals also thought of mixed individuals as the medicine for the country’s main problem: the building of a legit identity for a whitened civilized society. On the basis of this information, we emphasize that the cited “whitening” politics, according to Domingues(2005, p.22), created an ethnic tolerance idea that was certainly untrue and blinding whereas “[...] it contributed to dismantling the anti-racist political struggle because what does not exist is not fought.”

The process of making one whiter directs us to the question: What does it mean to be in white in Brazil?. Sovik (2004, p.2) states that the idea of whiteness goes beyond having European phenotypes and light skin, configuring a social position, it “ allows movement, lowers barriers.”. Sovik (2004, p.13) also points out that

Whiteness is an esthetic ideal inherited from colonialism. It is a social function, occupied by light-coloured people and a few privileged non-whites. Whiteness is a comparative value measured in a comparison to those who are not white. It is present even when race is not mentioned. Like all Brazilian identity discourses, Brazilian whiteness has a domestic and a foreign audience. In Brazil, Brazilians whites are white in everyday social relations: in effect – and that is what counts – they are white. Outside of Brazil, Brazilian whites are not necessarily considered white. When foreigners find it odd that Brazilians identify themselves as white, because they are of mixed genetic heritage, they are referring to an international pecking order and perhaps even pulling rank on Brazilian whites, as in the cases mentioned by Guerreiro Ramos. Because of the reach of this international hierarchy in Brazilian culture and the way the term “whiteness” evokes US models of race relations, there can be no universal definition of Brazilian whiteness. One can be white in Brazil but not the US, white in Bahia but not in Rio Grande do Sul.

Given these points, in analyzing racism and race interactions in Brazil one must assume that racism rules the economic, social and political relations of this republic. Systematic discrimination against afro diasporic people was and is, still, the basis and the moving structure of this country. Almeida (2018, p.39) states that: “Racism, as a historical and political process, creates the social conditions so that, directly or indirectly, racially identified groups are systematically discriminated against.”

Therefore, with the goal of reflecting upon the impact of society’s racist stereotypes towards black individuals in the sphere of English teaching, it is crucial to comprehend the historical background experienced by Amefrican² people. Once that is said, in this article, we discuss the role of education in the historical maintenance of white supremacy in Brazil and its consequences for the black English teachers’ identity, whereas it is shaped but also resists to that supremacy and its power.

Thus, in this essay, we argue that black English teachers using education, which is the master’s tool, can dismantle the master's house by ascending intellectually and socially destabilizing power relations.

The Brazilian educational system: First implications for the two-ness of black English teachers

² Term created in 1988 by Lélia Gonzalez to make reference to African descendants in the American continent.

The post-abolition period was marked by the remnants of slavery and, mainly, the attribution of responsibility for the difficulties and delay in adapting to the new lifestyle to the former slaves. As quoted by George Andrews (1991, p.210):

If blacks failed to rise in Brazilian society, it was evidently their own fault, as this society did not repress or obstruct their progress in any way. The continued reality of black poverty and marginalization was not seen as a refutation of the idea of racial democracy, but rather as a configuration of laziness, ignorance, stupidity, incapacity, etc., which prevented blacks from taking advantage of the opportunities offered to them by Brazilian society (...)

The “end of slavery” did not give black people the necessary resources they needed to live with dignity and freedom of any kind of exploitation. Instead, the idea of “integration” was more related to a new strategy of persisting hegemony than promoting equality.

Throughout history, the social identity, stereotypes socially created, of afro descendants in afro diasporic countries is based on eurocentric ideals. Indeed, blacks are seen as enslaved, animals, primitives, intellectually deficient, ugly creatures and sexual objects. These stereotypes have been strongly rooted in our society and its social, economic and educational organization, shaping how we distribute functions and social roles.

Regarding the educational organization, it is important to think about this logistic as a political act, filled with the interests of socially privileged classes. Hence, education has been historically denied to black people in Brazil and, then, when provided, used to maintain the social and political power of the white brazilian masses On the report of Saviane (2013, p.26):

To say, then, that education is a political act means to say that education is not divorced from the characteristics of society; on the contrary, it is determined by the society in which it is inserted. And when society is divided into classes whose interests are antagonistic, education serves the interests of one or the other of the fundamental classes.

Considering the interest of the white population in maintaining their power and supremacy, the Brazilian educational system has, in its roots, the aim of controlling and marginalizing Amefricans. In fact, there were many resistance movements that helped slaves in their fight for freedom, as raised by Reis and Gomes (1996, p.9),

Where there was slavery there was resistance. And of various types, Even under the threat of the whip, the slave negotiated spaces of autonomy with the masters or made soft bodies at work, broke tools, set fire to the plantations, assaulted masters and overseers, rebelled individually or collectively. There was, however, a kind of resistance that we could characterize as the most typical of slavery - and other forms of forced labor. It is the flight and formation of escaped slave groups. The flight did

not always lead to the formation of these groups. It could be individual or even group, but the slaves ended up trying to dilute themselves in the anonymity of the slave mass and free blacks (REIS; GOMES, 1996, p. 9).

However, despite that, African enslaved people were “educated” through violent punishments to accept their conditions as servants, avoiding rebellions. As a result, the national enslavement order was preserved, enslaved individuals were prepared for their captive lives (Maestri, 2004, p.192) and the image of black people as servants was marked. Furthermore, it is essential to mention that literacy was denied to these people.

Nonetheless, in the twentieth century, Vargas government proposed the called educational amendments, that, pursuant to Fonseca (1994), were double standard inasmuch as it made it possible for negroes to pursue public education but the received teaching was based on racial stereotypes and eugenic politics. In this regard, the degree of education that marginalized groups would receive matched their possible roles in society, built under colonial thoughts, and this fact influenced the development of the notion of place belonging, the idea that some places, hierarchically, are supposed to be filled with white people and others with black people. On that premise, even though this mindset was racist and manipulated by whites, part of the black community internalized this thought as true and dealt with mixed feelings about the legitimacy and belonging in “white spaces”, such as educational environments and economically privileged jobs, that required intellectual abilities that blacks supposedly did not have. Bourdieu (2003, p.59) emphasizes the use of education as an instrument of social stratification:

In addition to allowing the elite to justify what it is, an ideology of gift, key to the school and social system of the system, contributes to enclose members of the disadvantaged classes in the destiny that society identifies, causing them to perceive themselves as natural or who are not affected by an inferior condition and persuade who their social destiny (increasingly linked to their school destiny) should be to their individual nature and lack of gift.

Nevertheless, despite being originally used to assert a racist structure, education also represented social mobility. Silva (2008, p.19) states that the mentioned mobility is “intimately related to scholar instruction” and that education is “an essential instrument for the social ascension of blacks, and even for their perception of black ethnic-racial identity.”.

The noteworthy ambivalence of education, at first denied to black people and then offered through a racialist perspective, and, concomitantly, used by people of color to transgress the traditional social order, guides us to Audre Lord’s (2007, p.2), African

American poet, quote “For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house.”. Thus, we dare to affirm that, in this scenario, the master’s tool, education, can be used to change the social chain planned by the master, the master’s house. By using education to change their reality, black people begin to break some racist standards that portray this racialized group.

Beyond that, by being educated and educating others, black people achieved a new status in society, however, they also faced challenges. Primarily, as stated by Silva (2003), anyone holding an advanced level of education was able to teach in elementary school. Though, later, to become a teacher one was required to have a diploma of higher degree education that was hardly acquired by poor black people. Even though the educational scope was another space in which blacks were underrepresented, the few individuals of color inserted in this background were breaking the code. It is important to say that by highlighting the reach of these few individuals’ presence in schools, we do not aim to support tokenism. With regard to tokenism, Martin Luther King (1964, p.22)³ affirmed:

In the past decade, still another technique had begun to replace the old methods for thwarting the Negroes dreams and aspirations. This is the method known as “tokenism”. The dictionary interprets the word “token” in the following manner: “A symbol. Indication, evidence, as a token of friendship, a keepsake. A piece of metal used in place of a coin, as for paying carfare on conveyances operated by those who sell the tokens. A sign, a mark, emblem, memorial, omen.

As for the belief that black representativity is made of a few black individuals in positions of power, being this power political, economic or social, it is crucial to understand the complexion of representativity. It is true that the majority of black people hold similar experiences and face the scars of enslavement and racism, however, it is dangerous to assume that all blacks support the same kinds of fight for equality. That being said, having a black person in a higher position does not necessarily mean that this person is going to be fighting for the necessities and claims of the black community and, more than that, it takes more than one single individual to deconstruct the racism inserted in the structure of racist societies. Representativity matters but, by itself, does not accurately reach the roots of the lack of black presence in spaces of power.

On being two in one: The matter of black English teachers’ identity

³ King, Martin Luther. *Why We Can't Wait*. Signet classics.1964.

Evidently, the stereotype of black individuals as unable to produce knowledge still haunts black students and teachers. Paraphrasing Fanon (2009, p.260):“ I am the slave not of the idea that the others have of me but of my own appearance”. The stigma of our skin color or phenotypic characteristics still shapes people’s assumptions about African descendants.

If we consider blacks that teach other subjects than English, they will go through what we define as double stigmatization. This type of stigmatization happens in two different plans: scholar and faculty ones. While students, blacks face the stereotypes that reinforce their once-neglected intellectual abilities and, then, while teachers, these abilities are questioned twice, directly or indirectly: if we are not able to learn how could we formulate knowledge?

As for Black teachers of English language, we can add one more layer to the stigmatization process. Besides experiencing this negative discrimination at school and, after that, in performing their role as educators, second language teachers usually deal with the belief that only the whites have the right over the language and its teaching. Thus, this belief turns out to be an educational practice “as the exercise of domination stimulates the credulity of students, with the ideological intent (often not perceived by educators) of indoctrinating them to adapt to the world of oppression” (Freire, 2005, p.78).

As an example, black English teachers are more likely to be required to have the native-like accent since their own color skin does not match the typical English teacher enhanced by a racist society. The following excerpts were taken from the article “*Autobiographical narratives of race and racism in Brazil: Critical Race Theory and language education*” by Aparecida de Jesus Ferreira , who is a renowned researcher on Racial Critical Theory. These excerpts are narratives of teachers interviewed by Ferreira as she asked about how they have (not) experienced throughout their career.

Once, I went to a job interview and there was another [white] girl there. I clearly felt the difference in treatment between us. I was much more qualified for the vacancy; however I was not selected. I felt during the conversation with the interviewer that there was no way that they were not going to offer me the job. (FERREIRA, 2015, p.89)

On the other hand, a blond teacher recognizes her privileges

I was always described as being blonde with blue eyes when I was growing up. I never noticed the importance and relevance of discussing issues related to racism. I confess that I didn’t even think about this subject because I was living in a comfort

zone; the stereotypes that come to mind when you think about someone with the physical characteristics I have described above are largely positive. [...]
(FERREIRA, 2015, p.88)

Therefore, it is definitely important to think of many privileges that are part of white teachers, which includes English ones. According to Ferreira (2015, p.87), the ideology of whitening “has an impact on the identity of white people who continue to say things and take actions that put black people in less privileged positions” and it has serious consequences for Black English teachers identities and the way their identities are shaped. The following excerpt shows that

I can't really tell you when I first became aware of the existence of racism: I just know that I repeated songs, rhymes and sayings that they taught me when I was a kid, like “don't go upstairs or the black bogeyman will get you” (FERREIRA, 2015, p.87)

As Ferreira stresses out, once black teachers are aware of this process and take control of it they are able to fight against it and affirm their own identity that should by no means be suppressed or questioned regards their competence as language teachers.

Concerning English, to understand the polarization between this language and racialized groups, it is crucial to discuss the power relations involved in the construction of the status of *Lingua Franca* conquered by English and the globalization phenomenon, as well as the association of this language to white colonizers and, hence, white people. The cited status of *Lingua Franca*, as claimed by Jenkins (2009) concerns the use of the English language as the common language for non-native speakers from different nationalities. Nevertheless, when we reflect upon English as *Lingua Franca*, we are not only recognizing the way it has been used worldwide for communication. Rather, we are claiming that it may restrain many individuals' identities as they use that language and might suppress their own to become ‘native-like speakers’. Furthermore, that *Lingua Franca* has been the language spoken by the globalized world. In this paper, we conceive globalization, in accordance with Coopan (2004, p.12), as a double standard and power-related phenomenon:

It is, rather, an inherently mixed phenomenon, a process that encompasses both sameness and difference, compression and expansion, convergence and divergence, nationalism and internationalism, universalism and particularism. Consistently contradictory, deeply double, the “global” has less to do with the concept of a hegemonic, homogenous universal than with what Stuart Hall terms the practice of relational thinking. Attune to the various ways in which “the global/local reciprocally re-organise and re-shape one another,” relational thinking proceeds

under the sign of difference and plurality and through the method of articulation and connection.

In addition to Coopan (2004) and Hall (1990) ideas on power relation, we should reflect upon a hyperglobalist perspective, one of the three means proposed by Held (1999), we judge this one-sided homogenization as a possible threat to minorities and their cultures. Thus, in a globalized society, black communities can have a wider reach through transnational connection, articulating the racial struggle locally and globally, and, at the same time, become even more marginalized and stigmatized. Bearing this, North American imperialism and economic hegemony resulted in linguistic imperialism (Philipson, 1992), the imposition of this language all around the globe, altogether with the creation of linguistic bias and the killing of various languages, especially the ones coming from black and indigenous people.

Thereby, language is, historically, permeated by power conflicts and political hegemony. For instance, during the slave trade, oppressors tried to prohibit enslaved individuals to speak their native languages and separated enslaved groups that spoke the same languages. Truth is: different empires have been using language as a tool for domination, as exemplified by DeGraff (2016, p.76-77):

During the 15th century, there was an eminent Spanish linguist named Antonio de Nebrija who wrote to Queen Isabella of Spain in 1492 to advocate for the role of the Spanish language in establishing a successful Spanish empire in the New World. He offered the Queen his treatise on Spanish grammar as an “instrument of empire.” The goal, of course, was to establish Spanish as a superior language that would help rule the “savages” of the conquered “New World.” The objective was to convince the so-called “uncivilized” and “barbaric” people of the New World that, in order to become human, they had to adopt the Spanish language and forsake their own native languages. This brainwashing would then turn colonization into a state of mind—into “mental slavery”! So the European colonial enterprise was not only about colonizing the land, but it was also about colonizing the minds of the natives—that is, their cultures, their languages, their identities.

When thinking about such conflicts, it is essential to reflect on how the belief in certain racial ideologies and the practices underlying them, including forced population movements and slavery practices, inferred in the configuration of new and modified languages and, consequently, in the categorization of racialized peoples and their languages as degenerate and the colonizer’s language as pure and setting a profile to the speakers of valued languages: white.

In view of this, if we think of English as a cultural capital and as a possession of the “traditional” US citizen, excluding a range of other racialized English speaking countries, we must assume that this speaker is white. In being different from the white English speaker

pattern, or, in other words, black, black teachers have their credibility at stake. In that respect, a question rises in their minds: to assume their blackness, their roots and identities through an anti-racist approach and in the way they present themselves or to assimilate to the white oppressor?

Dubois (1903, p.10) comprehend this conflict between two different identities as a double consciousness:

It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of the others... of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness- an American, a Negro, two souls, two thoughts

Pointed by Souza (1983), the assimilation issue in black people's identity is a common process to those rising socially. This assimilation is connected to the desire of satisfying nonblack people through the construction of a "whiter" identity. We believe that the process of becoming alike the oppressor to be respected or, at least, less different, is a transnational issue, affecting afro diasporic people in different countries.

(Re)examining the relation between identity and education to dismantle the master's house

As we want to understand and discuss the intricacies of the two-ness in the identity of black English teachers, we rely on the definitions of identity proposed by Castells (2010, p.8-10), summarized in Olivier's work (2013, p.4-6). These definitions are divided into three aspects: the "legitimizing identity", the "resistance identity" and the "project-identity". However, in this paper, we will only focus on the two first definitions of identity.

On the matter of the "legitimizing identity", Olivier (2019, p.5) affirms that this type of identity "depends upon dominant social institutions such as education and religion, and contributor, in turn, to the establishment and maintenance of civil society". As the mentioned identity is related to society's expectations of citizens and, being aware that the Brazilian society is permeated by racist stereotypes, this model of identity tends to guide individuals to the assimilation process, accentuating even more the two-ness of their identities. To exemplify, we reiterate the ambivalent roles that the Brazilian educational system has played in the maintenance of power on the hands of white privileged groups. With regards to the "resistance identity", Olivier (2019, p.5) states that the second type of oneness is the one in

which individuals assume their background to manifest themselves “as active opposition to processes of social alienation and exclusion”.

With this in mind, it is true that the majority of black people have already found themselves code-switching between their “legitimizing identity”, whiter and socially accepted, and their “resistance identity”, affirming their “blackselfes”. This particularity, the uncomfortable process of dealing with white society’s patterns and, at the same time, marking our blackness is what characterizes the two-ness in black individuals' identity.

The way in which one develops its identity is directly connected to power and social relations, under the influence of our historical and cultural background, shaping and regulating who we are and how we perform socially. The relationship between one’s identity and culture is undeniable and, for that reason, it is possible to talk about cultural identity. Hall (1990, p.225) positions that

Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformations. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, they are subject to the continuous play of history, culture and power. Far from being grounded in a mere ‘recovery’ of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which, when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and this position ourselves within, the narratives of the past.

If we think about the black experience in the diaspora and the various negative social stereotypes created about African diasporic culture, as previously mentioned in this work, it is impossible to deny that these facts have significantly impacted the formation of Amefricans’ identity and how we manage to deal with our cultural identities. Being aware that this experience influences educators' way of existing and way of teaching, consider Ferreira (2000, p.48):

I believe that identity is an effectively important category to understand how the individual is constituted, determining his self-esteem and his way of existing. In this sense, it is essential, for the understanding of the problem of Afro-descendants, to know how they develop their identity, especially in adverse social contexts, in which they are negatively discriminated against.

Thus, the way in which teachers build and position their identities in the educational environment is related to their expectation of how others read them: a whitened black or a black. Under Brazilian models, one may rely on the idea “the whiter, the better” in order to avoid explicit discrimination, violenting and shaping his/her identity into a white one.

Within this context, it is necessary to work, through the master's tool, education, towards an unbiased understanding of African culture with the goal of deconstructing the racist narratives on African culture that perpetuates nowadays and empower black students in the embracement of their culture and, consequently, blackness. By articulating the cultural resistance movement, black teachers provide their black students with the formation of an ideological instrument, a place in which shared black experiences come in contact, a *Quilombo*, as defined by Nascimento (1986, p.124):

During its trajectory, the *quilombo* serves as a symbol that encompasses connotations of ethnic and political resistance. As an institution, it has unique characteristics of its African model. As a political practice, it proclaims liberal emancipation ideals that at any moment of crisis of Brazilian nationality corrects distortions imposed by the dominant powers.

Nowadays, we claim that knowledge and resistance enables us to build up new “quilombos” or new shelters for identities and for the practices which reflect the right of these identities to exist. Through critical education, black English teachers may provide their students with safe quilombos as they understand the two-ness of their own identities and encourage their students to embrace their identities as they challenge the white supremacy empowered by the English as lingua franca. In this sense, black teachers (and students) can use English not as an icon for “redemption” or promise of “success”. Rather, they conceive the English language as part of education and consequently as a right. The right to have their identities heard and read (in English as well!).

Conclusion

Education, as a powerful tool to empowerment and social mobility, can be used to control and also to make others achieve autonomy, recognizing and criticizing the disparities that surround them. This being the case, the Brazilian educational system, reflecting the stereotypes of afro-descendants, is known for its ambivalences towards racialized groups and, mainly, black people. On account of it, taking in consideration that the cited nation was built under the kidnapping and enslavement of Africans, the roots for this under and misrepresentation of the black individual in the educational sphere become clear.

On this point, touching the English language, we understand that this language has been historically associated with white people, in other words, English has been thought of as

the language of the colonizer. Nonetheless, with the complex acquisition of the status of *Lingua Franca*, this language became a “world possession” and an imperialist instrument as well. Despite its global character, it is impossible to deny that black English speakers are almost erased from the picture of ideal English speakers and people still support the notion that native speakers have more authority to teach this language. In being so, non-native black English teachers, deal with the challenges of their underrepresentation in this field and, also, face the complexities embedded by bias regarding their linguistic abilities, which takes us back to the stereotypes of black people as intellectually unable.

Hence, in analyzing the conflicts that black teachers experience, we want to highlight the effects of the ethnic-racial identification and its reverberation in second language teaching context. Reflecting upon the influences of teachers’ identities on their educative approach, bearing in mind that, in the report of Hall and Bucholtz (2004), the concept of identity regards not only similarity but also differences, the singularities of teachers identities should allow them to promote the identification to students through similarities and differences, creating room for the appreciation of diversity, being this diversity ethnic-racial, social, political, economic and so on.

Second language teachers, understanding the role that language plays as a stage for social identities construction, must do more than teach linguistic skills and work on the establishment of an emancipatory literacy. Hall and Bucholtz (2004) suggests that “... identity is not simply the source of culture, but the result of culture: in other words, it is a cultural effect. And language, as a fundamental resource for cultural production, is therefore also a fundamental resource for the production of identity”. Hereupon, a critical language teaching demands cultural, social and historical comprehension and, based on that, black teachers, from their standpoint, can develop a deeper anti-racist, interdisciplinary and multicultural work. In this model, students can use the new language to question political and social chains, dialoguing critically, and use their voices to tell their own history, as well as their people's history. Thus, by embracing their once belittled and marginalized ethnic-racial identity, black English teachers can contribute to the decolonization of English teaching by questioning English as *lingua franca* and assumptions over English teachers' ideal profile. More importantly, through that critical education, black English teachers will be strengthening their identity and their students’ towards a master's house dismantling.

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