

Experiences of transnational female Brazilians in Germany and Spain from a decolonial frame: biographical repertoire, migration, and identity

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Abstract

The starting point of this research is the context of personal trajectories, refreshing the anthropological tradition of ethnography through the incorporation of the multimodal technology of the comic book. Personal trajectories or biographical repertoires play a crucial role in shaping an individual's linguistic repertoire and identities, as well as in influencing their mobility choices. This ongoing research aims to delve into this phenomenon by examining language inequalities, linguistic struggles to "fit in" the social context, and avenues for linguistic autonomy, specifically among transnational Brazilian female migrants in Catalonia, Spain, and North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. The study, thus, focuses on the Brazilian diaspora, narrated by transnational women, and explores the intersections of migration, linguistic repertoire, identity, sense of belonging, and enduring colonial discourses amidst the planet's climate catastrophe, the most recent in South of Brazil. To achieve this, sociolinguistic concepts such as biographical repertoire, identity, and language ideology will be intertwined from a decolonial perspective. To translate this theoretical framework into tangible data and action research, participants will be engaged in producing comics featuring their transnational narratives in the mode of graphic novels or creative journals, encompassing personal stories from both willing and imposed relocations. Such research has never been undertaken, which is surprising given the concentration of the Brazilian population in these regions, that serve as migration corridors for Lusophone speakers, despite not being Portuguese-speaking themselves. Grounded in extensive biographical repertoires and drawing inspiration from Satrapi's comic book "Persepolis," Biemann's video "Sahara Chronicles," and the Brazilian diaspora itself, this research aims to elucidate the "geography of resistance" and its potential to counter anti-migration and colonial discourses that seek to exclude them.

Keywords: Brazilians, decolonial, linguistic repertoire, identity, comics.

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BIO

Miriam Lange Guerra, a PhD candidate at UDE, studies transnational language struggles and identity in migration from a decolonial perspective. She integrates her theatre background into research on languages and literature. She works as a localization translator, teacher, content producer, and actor. With a bachelor's in Languages and Literature from Brazil, she researched women workers at a recycling association and founded the Theatre Women Group "Tramelas". Her master's in Spain focused on language acquisition, feminism, and immigration through comics. Miriam conducted feminist research in Thailand with the We Women Foundation and now advocates for women migrants and refugees in Barcelona.