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PERFORMATIVITY OF RACE INTERSECTED BY GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN A CONVERSATION CIRCLE AMONG BLACK WOMEN

PERFORMATIVIDADE DE RAÇA INTERSECCIONADA POR GÊNERO E SEXUALIDADE EM UMA RODA DE CONVERSA ENTRE MULHERES NEGRAS

Glenda Cristina Valim de Melo*

ABSTRACT

In this article, I intend to mobilize the concept of race performativity intersected by gender and sexuality and to analyze this in the interaction of black women in an online conversation circle. To reach this goal, I analyze an online conversation circle with me and six other black women through Messenger and I base my analysis on the concept of performativity from Austinian and Butlerian studies, and on the concepts of race articulated with other discursive-bodily markers indicated by hooks (1995), Bento (2002), Mbembe (2014, 2018), Pacheco (2013), among others. In the analysis of the conversation circle, I used the linguistic indexes suggested by Silverstein (2003). The analysis shows the participants intersecting racial performativity with gender and sexuality in the process of understanding the peculiarities of their own existences in different contexts and moments of their lives.

Keywords: performativity; race; gender; sexuality; black women.

RESUMO

Neste artigo, pretendo mobilizar o conceito de performatividade racial intersetada por gênero e sexualidade e analisá-lo na interação de mulheres negras em um círculo de conversação on-line. Para atingir este objetivo, analiso um círculo de conversação online comigo e com outras seis mulheres negras através do Messenger e baseio minha análise no conceito de performatividade de estudos austinianos e butlerianos, e nos conceitos de raça articulados com outros marcadores discursivos-corporais indicados por hooks (1995), Bento (2002), Mbembe (2014, 2018), Pacheco (2013), entre outros. Na análise do círculo de conversação, utilizei os índices linguísticos sugeridos por Silverstein (2003). A análise mostra os participantes cruzando performatividade racial com gênero e sexualidade no processo de compreensão das peculiaridades de suas próprias existências em diferentes contextos e momentos de suas vidas.

Palavras-chave: performatividade; raça; gênero; sexualidade; mulheres negras

INTRODUCTION

Ever since my childhood my attention has been caught by racial issues. It always attracted me when the topic was addressed at school, but the fact that textbooks and teachers always blamed black people for the racial aggressions they historically suffered, regardless of social, cultural and historical structures, got me confused. In those iterable performative speech acts, throughout the educational stages, there was no mention of the black resistance movements that fought against enslavement. Zumbi, Dandara, *candomblé* and *orixás* were invisible. So, like me, many black children did not fell represented in the curriculum. Racism was not openly talked about in the 1980s or early 1990s, and in the countryside of São Paulo, where I attended school, this topic was rarely broached outside the households. Gradually, I began to understand even more what I have heard, since the age of five, from my father and grandfather, about the lack of interest in telling us other narratives about ourselves, a fact that reminds me of Chimamanda Adichie[1] when she warns us about the danger of a single story. Today, as an older woman, I perceive and observe more sharply the effects of this hegemonic discourse. According to Bento (2002), there is a legacy of Brazilian slavery for white people,

> there are symbolic benefits, as any group needs positive references about itself to maintain its self-esteem, its self-concept, valuing its characteristics and, thus, strengthening the group. So, it is important, both symbolically and concretely, for whites, to be silent about the role they played and play in the situation of racial inequalities in Brazil. This silence protects the interests at stake (BENTO, 2002, p. 26)

1. The author addresses this topic in a TED presentation that can be accessed through this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZUtLR1ZWtEY.

As mentioned by the author, in addition to protecting 'white lives' (those most cried over when they are victims of robberies or stray bullets), the privileges continue to be kept in these hands. In addition, black life stories would remain being portrayed with the erasure of thousands of actions of resistance and transgression performed by many enslaved people at that time.

Currently, it is possible to have access to other narratives, due to the activism of Black intellectuals and collectivities/collectives. Based on Appadurai (2001), in these processes of globalization and mobility, the narratives of those 'from below' circulate on social networks, in some classrooms, in different collectives etc., bringing to the center the voices of so many black lives once heard and legitimized only in the most peripheral parts of the cities or in the slave quarters. With the changes in the Educational Laws, race and ethnicity started to be guided by the prescriptions on Education and also in some educational institutions. Affirmative actions implemented in recent years contribute to the blackening of the spaces of power (universities and the federal, state and municipal public sectors, for instance), even if we still find impostors who, despite being protected by the colour of their skin, do not claim to give up their privileges and claim to be black. These opportunities acquired with great effort are being appropriated by black people and they are like a sea that flows into the ocean, producing new waters, with no possibility of going back to the slave quarters.

In addition, current debates about race can be observed in different contexts and, with the advent of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), race is a topic discussed in the web. The web made possible the circulation of discourses on the topic at an unimaginable speed and it became a space of hope (MELO, 2017) for social minorities to address their sufferings, face them, produce new actions without fear of physical exposure. Hope, as Eagleton's proposes (2017), to continue fighting, but here, specifically, to mitigate the suffering of the black population. This hope can be seen on social networks like Facebook, for example, where it is possible to find closed pages or groups aimed at this population with focus on common interest topics. It was in an online space, Instagram, and also in a collective of black women on WhatsApp, that I started to observe the discursive performances of some black women, whose posts called my attention for their power when dealing with the gendered racial theme. There they signaled varied experiences when dealing with their blackness. In this way, I intend to operationalize the concept of race performativity intersected by gender and sexuality and analyze this performativity in the interaction of black women in an online conversation circle.

This article consists of three sections. In the first one, I approach the methodological paths of the research; then, I discuss the concept of language as performance and performativity; and finally, I present a discussion on racial performativity intersected by gender and hybrid sexuality with the data analysis generated in this research.

1. THE PARTICIPANTS AND THE CONVERSATION

According to Moura and Lima (2014), the conversation circle is a way of producing data in which the researcher is herself a participant in the investigation and also generates data. According to them,

> conversation circles consist of a method of collective participation in a debate on a certain topic in which it is possible to dialogue with the subjects, who express themselves and listen to their peers and themselves through reflexive exercise. One of its objectives is to socialize knowledge and implement the exchange of experiences, conversations, dissemination and knowledge among those involved, in order to build and reconstruct new knowledge on the proposed theme (MOURA and LIMA, 2014, p. 101).

Thus, in order to exchange experiences and knowledge among black women, a conversation circle was organized based on the observation of the profiles of some participants on the social networks Facebook, Instagram and/or on Whatsapp. Three criteria were taken into consideration for the participants selection: a) they were selected for declaring themselves black in these spaces; b) also for discussing race and gender topics and c) undergraduate educational degree. After being selected, each one of them received an invitation to participate in the group, via Whatsapp or Messenger. In this invitation, it was explained that the objective of the group was to make them talk to other black women about relevant themes to them and that the data would be used in a survey. Nine women were invited, six accepted the invitation, two refused justifying that they would not like to participate and another was not available.

After acceptance, a group was created in Messenger. The date and time were negotiated with all the women. It was scheduled, then, August 11, 2018, at 1:30 pm. It was agreed that they would be reminded about the meeting

the day before the appointment. It is worth noting that, in order to preserve the participants' identities, personal information will not be disclosed and the names used here are fictitious. Below, I present the description of the six participants, apart from the researcher, carried out by themselves at the beginning of the conversation circle, in response to the researcher's instruction: "while we are logging in, I will introduce myself and then I want you to introduce yourselves too...".

- Preta: "I am Preta, I am 34 years old, I have a degree in Psychology. Currently, I am a primary school teacher at a municipal school in X. During my undergraduate research I studied black women and racism; I have a blog called: x" (11 August 2018).
- Mirela: "My name is Mirela, I am 26 years old, I identify myself as black since I was 20 years old, I am from the city of X, I am a Psychologist, I have worked in the clinic with community groups and also with affirmative actions of the Afro-Brazilian identity" (11 August 2018).
- Amanda: "... my name is Amanda, I am a black woman from Recife, I am 31 years old, I have a degree in history and a master degree in sociology and I am a PhD student in sociology at X and I research the racial issue in prostitution" (August 11, 2018).
- Eduarda: "... my name is Eduarda, I am 33 years old, I am a Portuguese and English teacher in the X public school system, I have a degree in Portuguese/English. I am X and I have been in X since 2011" (11 August 2018).
- Emily: "I'm Emily. I have a degree in Business and Management and Social Science, I teach Production Management and I am a social activist, I develop an African history storytelling project that I conduct in schools or at events focused on black issues. I am a speaker and researcher; my focus is on teacher training aiming at the construction of the ethnic identity of black people. I am 43 years old" (11 August 2018).
- Isis: "My name is Isis, I am 34 years old, I have a degree in Social Communication/Journalism, I was born and I still live in X, in the interior of X. I am a content coordinator for a news portal in my city and I work as a reporter when I need it" (11 August 2018).

After an hour conversation, at 12:30 pm, I showed them a 5 minutes and 58 seconds video, broadcasted on GNT's "Saia Justa" program on June 8, 2018, at 6:30 pm. In it, the hostesses (three white women and one black woman) addressed the question of the loneliness of the black woman. The show hostess Gabi, the only black woman in the group, made a statement on this subject. Participants were asked to watch the video before the discussion.

Subsequently, the purpose of the conversation circle was explained again. We wouldn't make a video call because of possible connection problems, but we could write or send audios. Once the doubts about these issues were clarified, the chat was directed to the theme addressed in the program. It is worth mentioning that for the analysis of race performance intersected by gender and sexuality I used linguistic indexes (SILVERSTEIN, 1985, 2003), understood as linguistic marks that indicate the semiotic actions of the participants in the interaction, in this research they mobilize the performativity of race and intersecionalities.

2. LANGUAGE AS PERFORMANCE AND PERFORMATIVITY

We consider that discourses about black women are constructed in language, that is, in performative speech acts (AUSTIN, ([1962] 1990), which are naturalized by iterability and citationality (DERRIDA [1972] 1988). The performative term is from Austin's reflections ([1962] 1990) on how we use language to do things in social life.

Several scholars, including Derrida and Butler, build on Austin's perspective on language In his reinterpretation of speech acts, Derrida ([1972] 1988) indicates that specific conditions are not necessary for a speech act considered to be performative. For this author, the speech acts performed also include all kinds of speech acts. In other words, according to Derrida, language is performative and, as such, all speech acts are also performative. Still according to the researcher, performance is naturalized by iterability and citationality, that is, by repetition. In this iterability movement, it can also be considered the entextualization process, i.e., a text is decontextualized from its context and recontextualized in another. The process of entextualisation (decontextualisation and recontextualisation), proposed by Bauman & Briggs (1990), circulates speech acts in their performative or performativity face. An example can be perceived through Gabi's text in the GNT program, previously mentioned, about the black women loneliness. The participants, when they discussing about this kind of loneliness, decontextualize Gabi's text and recontextualizes

it in their own texts throughout the conversation, constructing diverse meanings for this loneliness during the conversation among us.

Iterability is central to the use of language, because it refers to other speech acts previously stated, however, we cannot understand that when we repeat, we repeat the same; in fact, iterability is not just a copy, it is also the possibility of the new and of the creative that can break with the idea of 'real substances'. In other words, considering the austinian felicity conditions, when we enunciate infelicitous speech acts that do not repeat the idea of 'substances of truth' or speech acts performed in the past, we produce 'something different'. We have, then, one of the faces of performativity, that is, the possibility of rupture and transformation of language.

Performativity is, according to Butler (1997), a concept based on Austin's linguistic performativity. However, the author uses it in association with the concept of regulated gender, that is, it controls what sustains it. This performance is composed of two faces: a face in which the act is a unique moment that refers to what has happened, what happens and what will happen, naturalizing something that already exists; a second face in which the speech act, when repeated, fails, thus breaking with 'the copy', enabling the transformation of narratives (speech acts), which can mitigate the suffering of lives considered precarious or less life. The following excerpt, taken from my data, can exemplify this relationship between repetition of transformation.

> **Yeah ... we talk so much about the issue of affectivity, of looking, of black women taking care of other black women,** you know, especially on commemorative dates, dates of, of struggle, November 20, 25, isn't it? Black women's day and everything else. People go to demonstrations, everyone raises their flags, But **we can't worry about the other's life, you know.** To question, ok? The main issue is this: **is this black woman feeling well, is she feeling loved, is she feeling welcomed regardless of the relationship she chooses for her.** You know... **judgment is still much stronger,** you know ... when we talk, for example, about this issue of colorism, you know, I know and everybody knows and we all, black woman, know that the pigmentation of skin interferes a lot in this, in this issue of racism itself, you know, of suffering more or less, and that there is a standpoint and that is very much related to the melanin you have on your skin, isn't it? **But many times, we stick to this detail, of who is blacker, who is less black, this one is married to a white man, that one does not have to be married to a black man; meanwhile, we forget to look at each other with affection.** When we talk about the loneliness of the black woman, it is not only about the loneliness of the relationship man-woman, woman-woman, it is **the loneliness of those who feel alone with their own pains and who are not listened to without judgment... it is very complicated.**

In Preta's speech, we can observe one of the contesting faces of race performativity intersected by gender. In the failure of the repetition of the act, we find this questioning of the actions of some black women in collectives, indicated by the linguistic indexes in bold. Preta, in repeating a performative speech act about black woman's loneliness, but also focusing on the absence of listening, affection and solidarity among black women, makes a break from the interactional topic previously under discussion, showing a type of loneliness unrelated to love relationships. In other words, "words are action" (ROCHA, 2013, p.44), as an action, they give rise to non-hegemonic counter-discourses, they value, hierarchize, hurt, liberate and sustain lives. In the aforementioned excerpt, Preta questions actions repeatedly carried out by black women themselves that hurt them: the absence of listening to their pain and, at the same time, the pain caused by this type of loneliness. As a result of this speech, we have Amanda's comment:

Amanda: Preta, your audio **touched me** deeply. What you said (and I think it strengthens **tiredness**) is the lack of attentive **listening**. We're screaming and people **don't listen to** us!

Language, for Butler (1997), is not separated from materiality, that is, from bodies; it builds them, it makes them to be born and to die. The terms in bold show the effects of Preta's discursive actions on materiality, that is, Amanda's own body. Returning to Butler (2018, p. 35) "an utterance gives existence to what it declares (illocutionary) or causes a series of events to happen as a consequence of the utterance (perlocutionary)".

According to Muniz (2016, p.783), the performative concept, when it does not mention truth and falsities in terms of language, but happiness and unhappiness, can provide possibilities to dilute the strength of such dichotomies and scientific pretensions that the language conceptions assumes each time much stronger than thought.Throughout the conversation, it is possible to observe reinterpretations of performative speech acts of race intersected by gender and sexuality by the participants in their performances as we are going to see in the next section. Thus, based on the assumption that language is action and performativity is made up of two faces, I will now proceed to address racial performativity intersected by gender and sexuality.

3. RACE PERFORMATIVITY INTERSECTED BY GENDER AND SEXUALITY AND BLACK WOMEN IN CONVERSATION CIRCLE

When we think about the performativity of races, this can lead to some misunderstandings and I mention here two of them that seem more problematic: to understand performance as the possibility of changing the color of our skin and/or acting like people of another race. The first is related to race as a biological concept, a concept that has already been overcome and deconstructed by genetics itself. Based on racial studies researchers, Munanga (1986), Sodré (1999), Telles (2003), Mbembe (2014), we can say that race is a Eurocentric invention that came from white people to name non-white people and that it comes into existence through the process of iterability and citationality of the language proposed by Derrida, that is, by repetition. The second misunderstanding is related to the fact that race is understood as a fixed body marker, with the effect a single possible racial performance for all racialized people.

To conceive race performativity is to say that race is a performative speech act regulated by the hegemonic racial structures that circulate in a given situation and also by the discourses that build and sustain racial issues. All this is permeated by culture, society and history, and it is important to reinforce that each country experiences these aspects in a different way, in other words, in scale levels. According to Mbembe (2015, p.38), "the first great classification of races carried out by Buffon occurred in an environment in which the language about other worlds was built from the most naive and sensualist prejudices". In this context, according to the Cameroonian philosopher, the black person is represented (constructed socially, historically, culturally, discursively and performatively) here as pre-human, an animalistic prototype that was not at the same level of humanity of white people, who conceive themselves as fully human.

To think about race performance in a Tupiniquim[2] context is to consider, firstly, that Brazilian society structures its social, political, economic and legal formation in slavery (SOUZA, 2015). Since that historical moment, the speeches that circulated and anchored this performativity, on the one hand, dehumanized, objectified, hypersexualized, castrated, underestimated black people, their cultures, their religions and their languages, demarcating their spaces and their functions. There is here a power of the plantation master over the life/death of male and female slaves who are seen as products, and whose humanity is always dissolved. At the same time, this racial performativity is also built and maintained by the discourses that indicate the white race as the one to be desired and followed, it is the hegemonic race. Conceiving it still in terms of race' seems awkward to many people, which shows us it is naturalized as a standard.

According to Miranda (2017, p.63), "not thinking about, not reflecting on oneself and the different other is the rule. Inequality is naturalized, internalized in everyday life as normal". Based on Souza (2015), it is worth saying that this discursive and performative construction of the white race gains perverse contours in the post-abolition period with the arrival of more European immigrants. In a process of racial cleansing of the black population, new discourses are introduced and they begin to regulate and sustain this racial performance, such as eugenics, whitening, the myth of racial democracy and the absence of racism. On the other hand, black people already freed, built by the fallacy of not having the skills brought from Europe, are geographically pushed to the peripheries and destined to work on the kinds of jobs that continue to make their lives precarious, their bodies become more abject and undesirable in 'white' spaces, except, of course, if they are providing some kind of service. According to Author,

> if we consider, for example, slavery, we will see that black bodies were constructed as inferior to non-black bodies; already in the so-called racial democracy, the discursive construction consisted of performative speech acts of equality between the social actors of all races. (MELO & MOITA LOPES, 2015, p. 57)

We know that language is a minefield where we walk. Ambiguity is a weapon (CREMIN, 2017, p.14). In this sense, considering the other side of performativity, as mentioned earlier, when it fails in the repetition process, transgression, reinvention and new meanings are produced. Racial performativity for black people is the possibility of not erasing our bodily marks, painting us white, red or yellow, but of transgressing as black people and occupying, for example, those spaces that are not meant for us, building social repertoires that were denied to us or not legitimized. In other words, it is the possibility of performing various racial possibilities, built on the repetitions that fail from racial performative speech acts. I emphasize that "it is necessary to unidentify black social subjects with discourses

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2. It is an indigenous group from Brazil that belongs to tupi nation. In the past this group lived in the South of Bahia and beach área of São Paulo. In the sense used in the article, it means typical from Brazil.

that make this specific materiality inferior, reinventing it and including black women in all contexts" (MELO & MOITA LOPES, 2015, p. 59). On the other hand, it is necessary to consider whiteness as a race and to discuss the privileges that this bodily clues carries. It becomes necessary to understand that the whiteness system is built in relation to other races, that is, it needs blackness to balance and confirm its racial boundaries.

Another aspect when conceiving race performativity is the intersectionality of the racial issue with other corporeal clues, such as gender and sexuality for example, to understand the complexity of social and discursive practices. Like Muñoz (1999), Sommerville (2000), Sullivan (2003), Barnard (2004), Melo & Moita Lopes (2013 and 2015), I share the perspective that the race is gendered and sexualized and vice versa. In this way, race performance can be investigated in its complexity intersected by gender and sexuality.

When we consider the performativity of race intersected by gender and sexuality of black women, it is generally built by the discourses of hypersexualization and sensuality of black women. Brazilian painter Di Cavalcanti portrayed the bodies of black women in a hypersexualized and sensualized way. According to Melo & Moita Lopes, (2014, p. 546), black women: considered "good lays", "hot", fiery or, in the words of Piza (1995, p. 58): "[...] the stereotype of the sensual, seductive, irresistible black woman, attraction to (male) sin". This intersectional perspective is also discussed by Gonzalez (1984) and according to hooks (1995), both during slavery and post-slavery, black women were built only as bodies, that is, without minds or intellect. They were constantly raped by the planters and, to justify these brutalities and the exploitation of these men, white culture produced the discourse that black women were hypersexualized and endowed with a primitive and uncontrolled eroticism. According to Carneiro (2003, p. 123), there is a discourse and a myth that the black woman would be "[...] more erotic or more sexually ardent than the others, a belief related to the characteristics of her physique, often exuberant". Isis' story inthe group chat illustrates these stereotyped performative speech acts, indicated by the highlighted linguistic indices:

> I was dating a guy from college, we were together for two years, the whole class knew it and I was always with him at his place and then there was(?) a day when ... his family was going to come there and he basically said... like... it won't happen you staying here, because my family doesn't know you're black. And we had been together for a long time and I was dark skinned like this, like ah ... **fucking her is OK, holding hands with her, strolling in the mall with her and introducing her to his family are not OK. And I don't accept this kind of situation anymore**... oh yeah ... it's like this ... anything like that, the first clue that I realize it's like this, **I walk away, what for? So as not to disturb my structure and not to disturb the path that I am tracing, because these situations mess us up, right?** (ISIS, 2018).

On the other hand, in the same section, as it can be seen in the linguistic indices highlighted, Isis shows that she no longer accepts this type of treatment, signaled by the bold metalanguage. In addition, it explains the effects of these performative speech acts that reinforce speeches that hypersexualize and objectify her. We observe here a racial performativity intersected by gender and sexuality of this participant who seeks to take care of herself exerting her power of agency, indicating a fight against both racism and sexism. Here we have the intersectionality between corporeal markers, showing the functioning of the racial issue articulated to gender and sexuality, but not listing a hierarchy between these categories.

According to Pacheco (2013), the way black women are represented throughout Brazilian history could influence their loneliness, the author also adds that while traditional feminism discussed and criticized formal marriage, black women debated their loneliness. For her,

> black and mestizo women would be out of the "affective market" and naturalized in the "sex market", in the eroticization, domestic work, feminized and "enslaved" markets; in contrast, white women would, in these constructions, belong "to the culture of the affective", of marriage, of stable union (PACHECO, 2013, p. 25).

Commonly, I find discourses about loneliness, affection and humanization of these women in specific online spaces for black women. They question the fact of being neglected in affections. Based on the premise that language and racism value and rank black female lives, I question, along with Judith Butler:

> Which humans count as humans? Which humans are worthy of recognition in the sphere of appearance, and which are not? What racist norms, for example, operate to distinguish between those who can be recognized as human and those who cannot? Questions that become even more relevant when historically rooted forms of racism count as bestial constructions of blackness (BUTLER, 2018, p. 43)

The desire issue appears throughout the conversation as it can be seen in the excerpts taken from it in Eduarda's and Preta's speeches, whose linguistic indices are highlighted in the excerpt bellow:

A year before I separated, we sat down and talked and we started to research about free relationships, about polyamory and everything... and we opened up our relationship and this relationship opening was... it was very important to me , in the sense of understanding that loving is not this thing of the feeling of possession and it is ... understanding that loving someone does not make the person exclusive to you and also understanding that the issue of love has to be problematized. It is a contract, isn't it? It's a contractual relationship where both parties need to be well, right? And that we can rather rationalize and separate the fact that loving one person does not make you blind to other people. And then ... I found myself as a black woman, within a free relationship structure, where you work hard on your sexuality issue, where I found myself having the opportunity to break some taboos, to know myself more as a woman, my desires and my wishes, to fulfill these desires. And at the same time as a black woman and experiencing these relationships, being very careful not to be seen as an object, knowing and trying as far as possible to choose well with whom I would have a relationship. Everything is so complicated and everything is so liberating that today, I don't see it in a monogamy relationship, unique and exclusive, because you start to understand other things (PRETA, 2018).

After the separation and such, I kept asking myself a lot what I wanted to experience in life, what it is that I would like to allow myself doing, but I would like to be complete as I am... I dated black guys and it was really cool, because I could date these conscious and also militant black guys, they were very productive relationships, even if they were very short. And currently I have a girlfriend, I'm in a lesbian relationship and respecting a number of individualities (EDUARDA, 2018).

Both Preta and Eduarda, as the terms in bold show, are open and willing to try other forms of relationships, which allowed them to know more about themselves. However, it did not mean, for both of them, the absence of conflicts and pain, since they are corroding patterns and living the process of building their performances as black women, as it is indicated by the linguistic indexes in bold. We can say that to be at the border is to be interpellated and, beyond that, it is to reinvent oneself. Both participants reframe their desires and sexualities.

At another point in the conversation, the participants contest the absence of spaces for the discussion about the loneliness of black women in hegemonic feminism as indicated by the bold linguistic indices that outline this aspect:

And I can be pessimistic, but **I feel that hegemonic feminism has not been giving the deserved attention (more of the same)**, but I deliberately think that this issue is neglected (AMANDA, 2018).

Exactly ... it doesn't echo, and we continue to carry this weight. **And when we talk about more of the same, we are talking about these other spaces that should already have advanced...** it is not a criticism of the movement of black women raising their demands ... but of the feminism that should welcome them... tired of fighting alone ... (MIRELA, 2018).

These contestations seek to erode the logic of a feminism that does not understand or accept black women's pain. For hooks (2015, p.207), "privileged feminists have been unable to speak to, with and on behalf of different groups of women, because they do not fully understand the interrelationship between oppression of sex, race and class or refuse to take this interrelation seriously". In the racial performativity intersected by gender and sexuality, the morphology of the black race causes black people to be recognized in a different way and language is crucial in this recognition process, since it is also related to power. According to Gomes (2015), this relationship (language and power) can be perceived in the media,

the negative way in which we, black men and women, are named through nicknames, the rapid relationship between being black and criminality that we see in the press and television, on social media and in the daily life, racist stereotypes and the way they quickly are learned by children, via language, and incorporated into the subjectivity of Brazilian men and women, the association between being black or ugliness, taking away the right to feel beautiful, among other things, involves a question of language and it is related to power, whiteness, racism and inequalities (GOMES, 2015, p. 121).

Following Gomes' remark on the power of language, education is indicated by the participants as the possibility of mitigating the suffering in the lives of black women. When dealing with interracial relationships, Emily addresses the importance of disidentifying ourselves, as Muñhoz (1999) mentions, of negative discourses and how to value ourselves positively. Linguistic indices in bold mobilize the perspective of disintensification or the construction of other narratives that positively value black bodies:

Many black families do not identify themselves as such, or when they do, they are not fully involved in the social construction of their ethnicity, and for this reason they seek to adapt to the ideal, to what is best accepted, to what will show him/her and others an attractive potential, because his/her partner is white .... So, **within this question I always advise my student teachers to work with the characteristics of the black and make them positive, I say the same in conversation with adults, whether they are men or women, because we have to learn to see beauty in us, when that happens it will be natural to see a black couple, and it will no longer cause wonder, sensationalism, as the media points out.** Therefore, we need to build our people within our perspectives as a people, and teach our children to see us as beautiful. (EMILY, 2018)

In addition, black feminism can contribute to the (re)construction of these women, because, according to Carneiro (2003, p. 129):

> to think about the contribution of black feminism in the anti-racist struggle is to bring out the implications of racism and sexism that have condemned black women to a perverse and cruel situation of social exclusion and marginalization. This situation, in turn, has given rise to forms of resistance and overcoming that are equally or even more potent. (CARNEIRO, 2003, p. 129)

Throughout the conversation circle under analysis, we can observe the participants embodying Black Womanhood. In addition, intersecting race, gender and sexuality to understand the peculiarities of black existences is essential to investigate social practices.

If bodies are constructed in history, within and by language and if we act by performing certain speech acts, the transgressive face of racial performativity intersected by gender and sexuality might enable us to tell other stories about black lives in addition to those I mentioned in the introduction to this article. As it was possible to observe, the participants in the conversation circle are building other stories for their lives; they contest spaces that erase their pain; they are tired of the disregard shown by hegemonic feminism, but they nevertheless seek alternatives to live other experiences that value them as lives that matter.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the era of global mobility and at the same time pandemic moment, the state, according to Mbembe (2018), is no longer the only one that has the right to kill and the army, as well, is no longer the only institution that has the right to regulate and perform this action. In this necropolitics in which black lives are less worthy, we have a kind of education that deprives black, indigenous and white lives to access more about themselves. Based on that, an emancipated education ought to provide, first, racial issues intertwined in the relations of gender, sexuality; second, the relevance of language in daily routine, as it can affect us like racism, for example. In other words, we do not need an educational perspective that designates an entire nation to death as citizen; in fact, we do value a system supported on an equal basis, because we can build a more just and diverse society.

In this sense, the concept of performativity of race intersected by gender and sexuality that I operate along these lines can bring us both epistemological and practical gains, as it brings the possibility of enacting racial, gendered and sexualized performances, without fear of judgment. Even though the concept of intersectionality is still incipient, it can allow black lives, like mine, to be built and read, finally, as lives that also matter and that not only make sweets or cook food in the kitchen, but also enact performances in spaces that were not meant for us.

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