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Foreword Language, Gender, Race and Intersecctionalities

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Foreword

Apresentação

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I am delighted to write the introduction to this special issue of the Brazilian Journal of Applied Linguistics (RBLA), whose theme is language, race, gender, and intersectionalities. The last issue of the 2019 volume is an opportunity for applied linguists and other scholars to consider new ways to reconnect with language as social practice and revamp the roles of applied linguistics in challenging real problems of the real world and developing distinct frameworks to work on these problems. This volume represents the necessary intentionality of the scholarship of linguists who understand research as a political act.

In 2019, conflicts of power, right-wing extremism, and an aggressive campaign against differences were the basis for symbolic and actual violence around the world. However, I will highlight the importance of the theme of this issue for Brazil, where a painful and persistent political process of dismantling public education is part of the local impact of a global extremist movement. I believe applied linguists who relate knowledge production to social justice oriented transformation will find hope in a year that has been especially difficult for Brazilian universities. Academia needs hope in troubled times.

In Brazil, the main actors in public research universities, scholars, and students have insistently been accused of being a waste of taxpayers' money in infinite *balburdia* or shambles that threaten the moral and order of the country. One reason for the so-called *balburdia* is the presence of students fighting for, and celebrating their rights for being minds in racialized and gendered bodies. On Brazilian campuses, Black students embracing their Afros, men wearing skirts, and scholars that embrace and enforce the rights of any minoritized identities have become one of the excuses for extreme

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budget cuts and campaigns to devalue the role of university autonomy in Brazil. This issue of RBLA is a relevant contribution to the international community of linguists. It not only has articles that are relevant to the field of language studies, but also exposes global challenges via the analysis of local cases.

In spite of many cowardly efforts of condemning and erasing differences in academia, language, race, gender, and intersectionalities still rise in discourses of justice and human rights. Scholars continue fighting for high-quality education for Brazilian youth. Researchers continue struggling for social and cognitive justice. Through the relevance of the discussions that authors bring to this issue of RBLA, scholars who are concerned with understanding the troubled times we live in, both in Brazil and the world, will find in this issue essential reflections.

The contributors all provide essential insights and rigorous approaches to the topics they address. Viviane Cabral Bengezen, Edie Venne, and Janet McVittie have significantly pushed to share their understanding of the degree to which racism can penetrate the being. Rodrigo Esteves de Lima-Lopes and Maristella Gabardo's analysis reveal the representations of women and female bodies through the study of social media comments about the Argentinian social collective Ni Una Menos. Juliana Harumi Chinatti Yamanaka discusses the relationship between language and body, emphasizing Black Bodies, and women's bodies. Daniella Corcioli Azevedo Rocha explains the hostile and offensive comments of internet users about the staging of the crucifixion of Christ by a model during the Gay Pride Parade in São Paulo. Glenda Cristina Valim de Melo reveals slave trade ads in the 21st-century media. She analyses the textual trajectory, entextualization, and indexical orders of these ads. Selma Silva Bezerra's article approaches high school students' discourses from the perspective of the coloniality of gender. Daniel de Mello Ferraz, Micheline Mattedi Tomazi, and Ariel Sessa present a transdisciplinary analysis of the killing of Matheusa, a Brazilian trans non-binary person murdered in Rio de Janeiro. Gabriel Nascimento analyses the autobiographical narratives of Black English teachers in Brazil.

Last, but not least, I would like to say that it is a relief to see that race and race relations are finally becoming part of research in applied linguistics. It is never unnecessary to remind that the myth that Brazil is a racial democracy still haunts the social and academic practices of Brazilian scholars. This issue represents a piece of evidence that Brazilian academia

is leaving its comfort zone, where the convenient denial of structural racism has to create room for conversations that overcome the barriers imposed by the colonial narratives. Racialized teachers, learners, and language speakers become visible through the methodological and theoretical approaches present in this issue.

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