

Language in colonial contexts.

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Introduction

Following the research collective *Colonialidad/Modernidad* from Abya Yala, nations may regain their formal autonomy by decolonization, but power structures that were installed during colonial times are still alive today and control former colonies as well everybody's lives. Quijano (1992, 2007) calls these power structures Coloniality. Coloniality influences aspects of social reality such as being, knowing, thinking, power and language. Coloniality's brighter side of the coin is Modernity; a complex narrative that positions the West in the centre of the world and as something all other people and nations should strive to reach. This narrative enables violent acts against those deviating from this ideal (Mignolo 2011). Since Coloniality/Modernity is all around us, "as modern subject we breathe coloniality all the time and every day" (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 243) producing and reproducing it. Therefore, it must also influence language and aspects such as language use, acquisition, ideologies etc.

Interests

- How does Coloniality influence the Wounaan's (linguistic) life in Bogotá?
- What colonial structures are present?
- What decolonial structures are visible?
- How do these manifest?
- How can colonial aspects be deconstructed and reduced?

“A los indígenas a veces **no entienden**, a veces no lo saben hablar español y como ya van como niño es muy difícil para hablar si? A veces como **hablan mal** otros **mestizos** ‘mira esta gente **me hablaron mal de mi**’ Pero no es así sino que por no hablar bien, es que es muy difícil español para los indígenas eso es lo que pasa y **por esta razón** hay veces que **lo discriminan**”



Methodology & Methods

To answer my questions, I used **indigenous methodology** (Smith 2012, Wilson 2001) and **indigenous methods** together with **occidental methods**, in order to decolonize the “learning” process.

For the **analysis**, I use the **Discourse-Historic Approach** (Reisigl 20018) because for both Coloniality and DHA, context and historic aspects are key (Mignolo 2011).

Materials

Audio recordings of two *Círculos de palabra*, **protocols** from three participants observations as well as **field notes**.

Tentative Conclusions

Colonial structures influence the Wounaan's life in Bogotá in regard to **being, thinking, doing and language**. The Wounaan also reproduce colonial/modern narratives. Nevertheless, the cabildo Wounaan-Nonám and the Wounaan are aware of this and **fight it**. They also created a **decolonial space** for themselves and keep on creating them. Based on critique, the aim is to diminish colonial discourses.

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