Infographic representations of language repertoires and markets in a teacher education program for teachers of Portuguese from lusophone Africa

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We present the results of the discussion developed during various editions of an 8-to-18-hour module of a teacher education program sponsored by various Brazilian government agencies for in-service training of secondary education public school teachers of Portuguese from multilingual African countries where Portuguese is the (sole) official language. During these discussions, we introduce participants to an infographic representation, informed by sociolinguistics and education literatures, of the language market in Brazil and then discuss about their own communities and societies with the aim of drawing a similar representation of the sociolinguistic market of their own nation-states. In the present work, we present our own infographic representation of the Brazilian sociolinguistic market and then infographics produced by Portuguese teachers from Angola, Cape Verde, Guiné-Bissau and São Tomé and Príncipe, with special attention to the Cape Verdean infographic as it developed along 10 different discussion sessions with different groups of 20-30 teachers each. We highlight the main aspects of language ideology where the various linguistic infographic landscapes converge or diverge and reflect on the echoes we hear in terms the teachers’ positions regarding objectives and practices of Portuguese language education, which tend to mandate a strict monolingual classroom regime. This is contrasted with the teachers’ own transidiomatic practices in their multilingual contexts of action, which are brought to the fore during discussions in the module. We provide a critical assessment of our own position as sociolinguists/teacher educators/language policy agents in our attempts to produce critically engaged language teacher education. Finally, we offer a brief overview of the organization of the program courses, their overall objectives and modalities offered in six annual editions from 2008 to 2013.

Keywords: lusophone Africa, Portuguese language education, language ideology.