

Ethnic-racial relations education in humanities courses at federal universities in Northeastern Brazil

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Abstract

This article analyzes how undergraduate teaching programs in the Humanities at federal universities in Northeast Brazil incorporate, within their curricula, the principles of the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations (DCN-ERER). Through a qualitative documentary research, 2,810 syllabi of mandatory courses across 76 programs were examined, identifying 691 syllabi with content related to the theme—440 with a direct approach and 251 with an indirect approach. The analysis revealed varying levels of integration of the guidelines, with UNILAB standing out for having the highest proportion. The emphases varied: African heritage themes were more prominent at UFMA; Indigenous content was emphasized at UFBA, UFC, and UFRN; and race/gender intersectionality was most present at UFRN, UFC, and UniVASF. It was observed that the implementation of the DCNs is uneven across institutions, highlighting the need to consolidate these guidelines in order to strengthen anti-racist education.

Keywords: Ethnic-Racial Relations Education. Initial Teacher Training. Curriculum. Federal Universities. Humanities.

Educação para relações étnico-raciais nos cursos de licenciatura em humanidades das universidades federais do Nordeste

Resumo

Este artigo analisa como cursos de licenciatura em Ciências Humanas das universidades federais do Nordeste incorporam, em seus currículos, os princípios das Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para a Educação das Relações Étnico-Raciais (DCN-ERER). Através de uma pesquisa documental de abordagem qualitativa, foram examinadas 2.810 ementas de disciplinas obrigatórias em 76 cursos, identificando-se 691 com conteúdos relacionados à temática, sendo 440

com abordagem direta e 251 indireta. A análise evidenciou diferentes níveis de integração das diretrizes, destacando a UNILAB com maior proporção. As ênfases variam: africanidades na UFMA; conteúdos indígenas na UFBA, UFC e UFRN; interseccionalidade raça/gênero na UFRN, UFC e UniVasf. Observou-se que a implementação das DCNs ocorre de forma desigual entre instituições, sendo necessário consolidá-las para fortalecer uma educação antirracista.

Palavras-chave: Educação das Relações Étnico-Raciais. Formação Inicial Docente. Currículo. Universidades Federais. Ciências Humanas.

1 Introduction

The approach to ethnic-racial relations in Brazilian education is of paramount importance, especially in teacher education programs in the Humanities at federal universities in Northeastern Brazil. This theme is fundamental to the training of critical, conscious, and culturally sensitive educators who are prepared to engage with the ethnic and cultural diversity present in the classroom. In order for these professionals to be adequately prepared to deal with such dynamics, in-depth study and knowledge of this topic are indispensable (Klein, 2018).

It is based on this understanding that Black social movements have gradually, since the 1980s, questioned and challenged discussions surrounding ethnic-racial relations in schools. As a result of this struggle, Law No. 10,639/2004 (BRASIL, 2003) was enacted, amending the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (BRASIL, 1996) and establishing the mandatory inclusion of “Afro-Brazilian History and Culture” in basic education. Subsequently, Law No. 11,645/2008 was enacted in order to expand this requirement to include the history and culture of Indigenous peoples. Others important milestones within Brazilian educational policies include the National Curriculum Guidelines (DCN) for Ethnic-Racial Relations Education and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture (BRASIL, 2004), the DCN for Indigenous School Education in Basic Education (BRASIL, 2012a), and the DCN for the Education of Indigenous Teachers in Higher Education and Secondary Education programs (BRASIL, 2015).

This legislative and curricular movement in Brazil dialogues with the perspective of the coloniality of knowledge discussed by Quijano (2000), as it seeks to break with the

Eurocentric epistemological hegemony that has historically silenced other forms of knowledge within academia. Furthermore, the enactment of these laws highlights education as a central concern of Black and Indigenous organizations. According to Gomes (2005), education is understood by Black and Indigenous movements as a right conquered through struggles for democracy.

This perspective goes beyond social mobility, viewing education as a commitment to the production of knowledge that values dialogue and respect for ethnic and cultural diversity, as well as a space for civic education aimed at combating racial discrimination.

It is also important to highlight the implementation of affirmative action policies aimed at access to and retention in public universities, particularly following the enactment of Law No. 12,711/2012, known as the Quota Law (BRASIL, 2012b), as well as student assistance programs. These policies have significantly contributed to increasing Black representation in higher education and have played a crucial role in promoting social justice within these spaces (Veras; Silva, 2020). Law No. 12,228/2010 also deserves attention, as it assigns to the Federal Executive Branch the responsibility to promote the inclusion of themes related to the ethnic and cultural plurality of Brazilian society within teacher education curricula, thereby strengthening the perspective of a more diverse and inclusive education (BRASIL, 2010). Programs in the fields of Humanities, Languages, and Arts, in particular, serve as the main vehicles for disseminating ethnic-racial discussions in schools.

This article analyzes how teacher education programs in the Humanities at federal universities in Northeastern Brazil incorporate legal principles, with a particular focus on the National Curriculum Guidelines for Ethnic-Racial Relations Education. It argues that gaps in the implementation of these guidelines are related to the ways in which teacher education is conceived and operationalized within curricula.

In this context, the present research seeks to contribute to the understanding of educational strategies capable of promoting teacher education that is more sensitive, critical, and committed to ethnic-racial diversity in Brazil. The study aims to identify curricular syllabi that may serve as positive references, as well as to point out gaps and areas that require improvement. Moreover, while many studies focus on basic education,

this research advances the field by mapping the landscape of initial teacher education across the entire Northeastern region of Brazil.

The aim is to foster more consistent formative practices in teacher education programs, so as to prepare future teachers, both theoretically and practically, to critically integrate ethnic-racial issues into their everyday pedagogical practice. Ultimately, the education of teachers capable of engaging with the complexity of Brazilian diversity constitutes an essential element for the consolidation of a more inclusive, equitable, and socially committed public education system.

2 Methodology

This study presents the results of a documentary research with a cross-sectional design, exploratory character, and qualitative approach. It was developed through the analysis of content related to ethnic-racial relations education in the curricula of teacher education programs in the Humanities at 20 federal universities in Northeastern Brazil. The analysis was based on the syllabi of mandatory courses extracted from the Pedagogical Course Projects, available on the institutions' official websites.

Initially, a survey was conducted using the National Registry of Higher Education Courses and Institutions (e-MEC Registry) to identify teacher education programs in the Humanities at federal universities in Northeastern Brazil, resulting in a total of 76 programs across 20 institutions. Subsequently, access to the Pedagogical Course Projects was sought through institutional websites or via email contact, and only programs with documentation available through these means were included.

Data collection took place throughout 2023, considering updates obtained from the requests made during this period. In total, 2,810 course syllabi were analyzed, of which 691 contained content related to Ethnic-Racial Relations Education (ERER). It is worth noting that although some institutions offer a larger number of teacher education programs in the Humanities, this study included only those whose syllabi were available on institutional websites at the time of data collection.

Next, the identified syllabi were categorized according to the approach taken toward the observed content and classified into two categories: “direct approach” and “indirect approach.” This classification was guided by the National Curriculum Guidelines (DCN) for Ethnic-Racial Relations Education and for the teaching of African, Afro-Brazilian, and Indigenous History and Culture (BRASIL, 2003; BRASIL, 2008).

Syllabi classified as adopting a direct approach explicitly referenced the themes established in the DCN, whereas those classified as indirect approach included more general content or incorporated Black authors in their bibliographies. This classification was carried out by pairs of researchers and subsequently discussed and validated by the research group.

At the end of the survey, 440 syllabi with a direct approach and 251 with an indirect approach were identified. However, it should be noted that no distinction between these categories was made during the data analysis stage. A detailed description of this mapping is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Total number of programs analyzed by university

Federal Universities in Northeastern Brazil	Total number of Humanities programs analyzed	Total number of syllabi analyzed	Total number of classified syllabi	Syllabi with direct content	Syllabi with indirect content
UFAL	5	192	48	25	23
UFOB	2	99	13	12	1
UFRB	4	108	14	13	1
UFSB	1	37	9	4	5
UFC	7	226	59	55	4
UFCA	2	74	10	5	5
UNILAB	3	98	65	62	3
UFMA	7	266	144	78	66
UFMG	4	210	30	19	11
UFPB	7	285	97	54	43
UFAPE	1	43	3	2	1
UFPE	5	188	21	8	13

Federal Universities in Northeastern Brazil	Total number of Humanities programs analyzed	Total number of syllabi analyzed	Total number of classified syllabi	Syllabi with direct content	Syllabi with indirect content
UNIVASF	2	85	7	4	3
UFRPE	2	99	8	5	3
UFDPAR	1	47	3	3	0
UFPI	5	168	62	46	16
UFRN	5	177	20	11	9
UFERSA	1	56	28	17	11
UFS	7	179	13	6	7
UFBA	5	173	37	11	26
TOTAL	76	2810	691	440	251

Source: Authors' elaboration based on research data (2024).

For the organization and processing of textual data, the IRaMuTeQ software was used, an open-access and open-source tool designed for the statistical analysis of texts. The program enables the systematization and visualization of data through graphical representations that are easy to interpret, offering resources such as statistical analyses, specificity analysis, Correspondence Factor Analysis (CFA), Descending Hierarchical Classification (Reinert's method), similarity analysis, and the generation of word clouds (Camargo; Justo, 2013).

In this study, Similarity Analysis was employed to examine the co-occurrence of the most frequent words in the corpus, generating a tree-like diagram composed of halos that represent the core meanings identified in the text. The thickness of the branches indicates the strength of associations between terms, while the size of the words reflects their frequency in the analyzed material (Camargo; Justo, 2013).

3 Results and Discussion

Box 1 presents the distribution of the analyzed programs by university. Curricula from Pedagogy programs predominated ($n = 17$), followed by History ($n = 14$) and Social

Sciences (n = 13). Indigenous Intercultural Teacher Education programs and the African and Afro-Brazilian Studies program appeared with the lowest frequency (n = 1).

Box 1 – Programs analyzed at each university

Federal Universities in Northeastern Brazil	Programs analyzed
UFAL	Geography, History, Pedagogy, Philosophy, Social Sciences
UFOB	Geography, History
UFRB	Social Sciences, Philosophy, History, Pedagogy
UFSB	Humanities and Its Technologies
UFC	Social Sciences, Philosophy, History, Geography, Pedagogy, Indigenous Intercultural Teacher Education Program for the Pitaguary, Tapeba, Kanindé de Aratuba, Jenipapo-Kanindé and Anacé Ethnic Groups, Kuaba Indigenous Intercultural Teacher Education Program
UFCA	Pedagogy, Philosophy
UNILAB	History, Pedagogy, Social Sciences
UFMA	Geography, History, Pedagogy, Philosophy, Social Sciences, Humanities, African and Afro-Brazilian Studies
UFCG	History, Pedagogy, Social Sciences, Rural Education
UFPB	Geography, History, Pedagogy, Philosophy, Social Sciences, Pedagogy with an emphasis on Rural Education, Religious Studies
UFAPE	Pedagogy
UFPE	History, Pedagogy, Philosophy, Social Sciences, Geography
UNIVASF	Social Sciences, Geography
UFRPE	History, Pedagogy
UFDPAR	Pedagogy
UFPI	Geography, History, Pedagogy, Philosophy, Social Sciences
UFRN	Geography, History, Pedagogy, Philosophy, Social Sciences
UFERSA	Pedagogy
UFS	Geography, History, Pedagogy, Philosophy, Social Sciences, Religious Studies, Rural Education
UFBA	Geography, Pedagogy, Social Sciences, Philosophy, History

Source: Prepared by the authors based on data from the applied research (2024).

Of the total of 2,810 syllabi analyzed, 691 were classified as related to ethnic-racial issues, of which 440 adopted a direct approach and 251 an indirect approach, according to the distribution presented in Table 2.

Table 2 – Syllabi classified by Humanities programs

Program	Number of programs analyzed	Total syllabi analyzed	Total classified syllabi	% of classified syllabi	Syllabi with direct content	Syllabi with indirect content
History	14	568	216	38,03	147	69
Social Sciences	13	445	131	29,44	93	38
Geography	11	417	67	16,07	26	41
Pedagogy	17	739	111	15,02	62	49
Philosophy	11	300	36	12	11	25
Humanities	1	32	12	37,50	6	6
Pedagogy with an emphasis on Rural Education	1	38	7	18,42	2	5
Rural Education	2	43	6	13,95	3	3
Humanities, Social Sciences and Their Technologies	1	37	9	24,32	4	5
African and Afro-Brazilian Studies	1	40	31	77,50	27	4
Indigenous Intercultural Teacher Education Program for the Pitaguary, Tapeba, Kanindé de Aratuba, Jenipapo-Kanindé and Anacé Ethnic Groups	1	60	28	46,67	28	0
Kuaba Indigenous Intercultural Teacher Education Program	1	37	17	45,95	17	0
TOTAL	76	2810	691	24,59	440	251

Source: Prepared by the authors based on data from the applied research (2024).

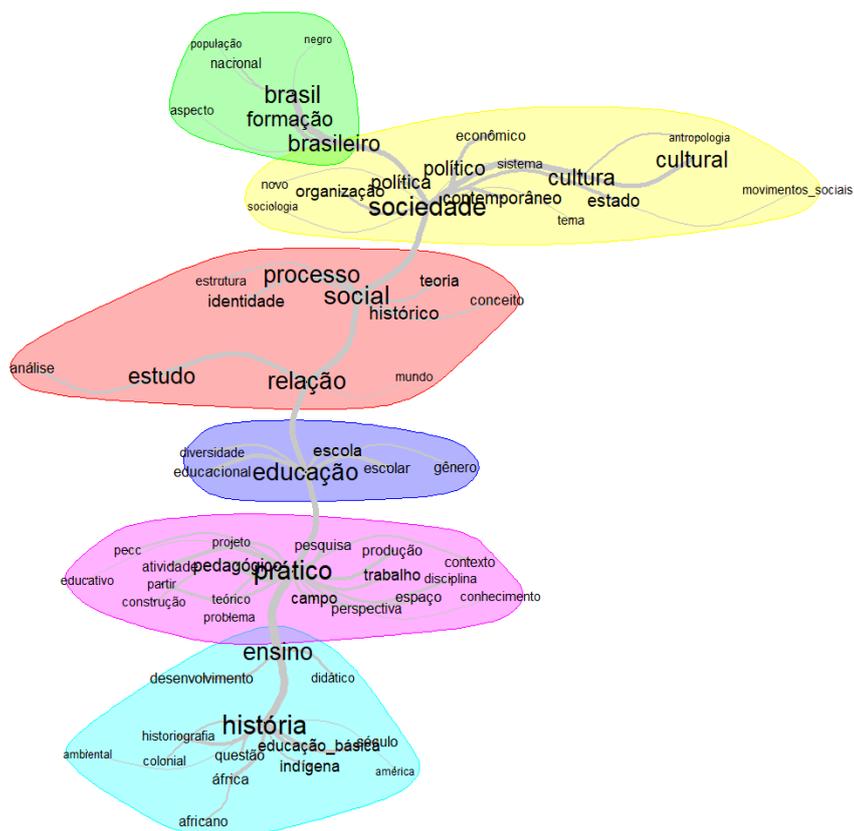
The selection of curricular content is not neutral, as the curriculum functions as a mechanism for legitimizing so-called “official knowledge,” often marginalizing non-hegemonic perspectives (Apple, 2004). Thus, the data presented in Table 2 indicate that the implementation of the legislation does not depend solely on institutional willingness but also encounters constraints rooted in the epistemological traditions of each field. History emerges as the area assuming greater prominence, whereas programs such as Philosophy and Geography exhibit a more peripheral integration of ethnic-racial issues. Of particular concern for educational policy is the Pedagogy program, which underpins basic education and showed low coverage of the topic, thereby revealing a structural fragility in antiracist teacher education.

Following the survey and classification of the syllabi, a qualitative analysis of the texts was conducted, identifying UNILAB as the institution with the highest proportion of content related to Ethnic-Racial Relations Education (ERER) and thematic diversity.

Greater emphasis on Indigenous issues was observed at UFC, UFBA, and UFRN within specific programs, while approaches to African and Afro-Brazilian themes stood out at UFMA. Intersectional discussions of race and gender were more frequent at UFRN, UFC, and UNIVASF, particularly in Social Sciences, Philosophy, and Geography programs.

Using the IRaMuTeQ software, the similarity analysis of the syllabi resulted in a tree structure composed of six halos, presented in Figure 1. The central node corresponds to the yellow halo anchored in the word *society*, from which the remaining halos branch out.

Figure 1 – Similarity Tree of syllabi from the analyzed Humanities programs



Source: Prepared by the authors with the support of the IRaMuTeQ software.

The similarity tree highlights the centrality of terms related to diversity, teacher education, and ethnic-racial relations, articulated with education, culture, curriculum, and society. This configuration indicates that, despite the still limited approach observed in some syllabi, there is an emerging formative discourse with the potential to strengthen Ethnic-Racial Relations Education.

Yellow halo: This halo emphasizes social and political dimensions, understanding culture as a space of dispute. It brings together courses of a contemporary and interdisciplinary nature focused on the analysis of ethnic-racial issues, social movements, and the political, economic, and cultural organization of society. These courses seek to understand social and cultural dynamics within a context of constant transformation,

promoting critical and reflective analyses of the complexities of social life, as exemplified by the course *Introduction to Cultural Geography*, offered at UFAL.

Methods, research and trends in Cultural Geography; Cultural Identity. Approaches from different theoretical and methodological perspectives to the concepts and categories of geographic science—Geographic Space, Territory, Region, Landscape, and Place—within Cultural Geography. Afro-Brazilian and African culture, recognition, and equality in the appreciation of identity and of the African roots of the Brazilian nation, alongside Indigenous, European, and Asian roots.

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This clustering suggests that teacher education in these programs seeks to position ethnic-racial relations not merely as a transversal theme, but as a structural and political phenomenon. The strong association between *culture* and *society* indicates that the programs are equipping future teachers to understand racism beyond individual prejudice, conceiving it as part of the political and economic organization of contemporary society.

Green halo: The syllabi converge around themes related to the formation of national identity and the history of Brazil from the colonial period to the present. Brazilian historiography and events such as slavery, independence, the Empire, and the Republic are recurrent, with emphasis on ethnic-racial relations and Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous contributions to the constitution of society. References to Laws No. 10,639/2003 and No. 11,645/2008 are evident, as well as a focus on Afro-Brazilian culture, African history, and pedagogical practices for the teaching of History in basic education, demonstrating a commitment to antiracist and pluricultural education.

The most recurrent terms refer to the historical and social formation of the country. *Population* appears in association with the constitution of the Brazilian population, migration processes, and ethnic diversity; *Black* stands out in discussions on Afro-Brazilian history, social movements, and the racial question; *national* and *Brazil* relate to national identity, state formation, and historical processes from the colonial period to the present. The terms *aspect*, *formation*, and *Brazilian* refer to different social, cultural, economic, and

political dimensions, as well as to the historical, territorial, and identity formation of Brazilian society, as exemplified in syllabi from the Sociology program at UFRB.

Experimentation with didactic-pedagogical resources in formal and non-formal teaching and learning spaces, including the evaluation and/or production of relevant didactic and supplementary teaching materials, based on the following themes: science and its relationship with other forms of knowledge; knowledge and schooling; fundamental concepts of the social sciences; socialization and social institutions; group formation and intergroup relations, identity and territorialities; African and Indigenous history and culture; the formation of the Brazilian people; Ethnic-Racial Relations Education and the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture; power, everyday life, and the State; forms of government, elections, and democracy; social change, social movements, and citizenship; contributions of Black and Indigenous peoples to Brazil's social, economic, and political spheres.

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The predominance of terms within this halo reveals an effort toward historiographical revision. This halo demonstrates that the curricula are actively contesting the official narrative of Brazilian history. For antiracist teacher education, this is crucial, as it provides future teachers with the necessary content to deconstruct the myth of racial democracy and to present a plural history in the classroom.

Red halo: This halo brings together courses focused on theoretical foundations and social analysis, emphasizing teaching and learning processes, the relationship between education, culture, and society, and teacher education. The syllabi address social inequalities, ethnic-racial relations, and political structures, as well as studies on diversity and identity in pedagogical practices, considering social class, gender, and sexuality. Anthropological content is also present, with theoretical and methodological approaches that articulate culture, education, and society, as exemplified by the Pedagogy program at UFRPE.

Sociocultural processes in the construction of identity and difference in society and in the school space. Multiculturalism and diversity in education. The categories of race, ethnicity, class, nationality, gender, and sexuality in the formation and problematization of identities.

Purple halo: This halo shows a predominant focus on the educational field, especially within school contexts. It addresses racial and sexuality-related issues, with

emphasis on identity and social themes in the school environment. In addition, this cluster highlights a perspective that links formal education to the promotion of equality and inclusion, in alignment with the National Curriculum Guidelines.

Courses at UFAL address diversity and culture by examining gender, sexuality, ethnic-racial relations, and Indigenous education within the context of contemporary education. Complementarily, programs such as Social Sciences and Pedagogy draw on theories from Social and Cultural Anthropology to analyze the relationship between culture, education, and society, thereby contributing to more inclusive pedagogical practices and educational policies, as also observed in components offered by UNIVASF.

To promote debate on human diversity in its various dimensions, seeking to relate the Brazilian social context, its conflicts and perspectives, and fostering an emancipatory reflection among students/citizens. To construct equality in gender relations within Brazilian society, with a view to identifying effective means to combat all forms of violence and discrimination against individuals and/or collectives. This course addresses sexuality from a broad and democratic perspective, involving and analyzing so-called sexual rights based on fundamental principles and the dimensions that shape the exercise of sexuality. Freedom, equality, and non-discrimination, as well as the protection of human dignity, constitute the foundations that structure the development of a democratic right to sexuality, compatible with the pluralism and secularity required by contemporary democratic societies. The course also addresses Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous History and Culture, guided by Law No. 10,639/2003 and Law No. 11,645/2008.

The emergence of the red and purple halos indicates an intersectional perspective in teacher education, demonstrating that racial discussions are articulated with issues of gender, sexuality, and class (Akotirene, 2019). This approach is fundamental for enabling preservice teachers to understand the school as a space marked by multiple forms of exclusion and to promote inclusive practices that are sensitive to the complexity of students' identities.

Pink halo: This halo highlights themes related to pedagogical practice and the production of applied knowledge, emphasizing the importance of addressing ethnic-racial relations in teacher education, particularly in courses focused on teaching practicum, instructional practices, and the development of teaching materials. This emphasis on

practice is essential for the implementation of culturally relevant pedagogy, as proposed by Ladson-Billings (1995).

The History program at the Federal University of Alagoas offers several practice-oriented courses focused on the development of projects and activities related to Ethnic-Racial Relations Education. Similarly, the course *Methodology of Social Intervention Processes*, offered in the Social Sciences program at the Federal University of Bahia, adopts a theoretical–practical perspective by discussing the relationship between society and the university, contributing to the development of social intervention projects. This approach is also evident in the course *Didactics in the Countries of Integration*, offered in the Sociology program at UNILAB.

Decolonization of teaching and learning. Didactics, educational science, instruction, and teaching. Teacher identity and specialized knowledge. Teaching and learning processes. Challenges of everyday school life and the classroom ritual in countries of integration. Organization and dynamics of pedagogical practice: planning, implementation, and evaluation of teaching and learning processes. Didactics laboratory from the perspective of the decolonization of teaching and learning.

This cluster stands out as strategic for the effective implementation of the legislation, as it articulates racial issues with professional practice, teaching practicums, and didactics, indicating progress beyond the purely theoretical field. Thus, this halo represents a bridge between antiracist discourse and everyday school life, equipping teachers for pedagogical intervention in the face of racism (Pinheiro, 2023).

Light blue halo: Finally, the light blue halo stands out for making themes related to Laws No. 10,639/2003 and No. 11,645/2008 more explicit, bringing together the largest proportion of courses focused on the teaching of African, Afro-Brazilian, and Indigenous history and culture. The syllabi include content on African and Indigenous history, relations between Indigenous peoples and colonial societies—such as cultural adaptations, wars of conquest, and alliances—as well as themes such as slavery, ethnicity, indigenist policies, and social and economic issues in Latin America and Africa, along with their processes of colonization and independence.

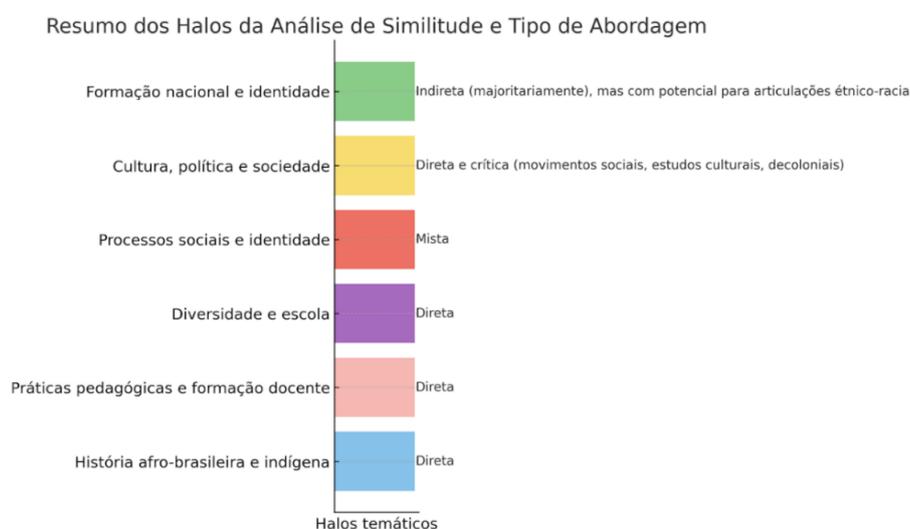
A wide range of historical, cultural, and social themes are highlighted, including economic transformations, imperialism, decolonization, cultural identity, and ethnic-racial relations, with additional emphasis on Indigenous history and human rights, as exemplified by the Music program at the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA).

Indigenist education policies: Colony, Empire, Republic. The educational system and the construction of the Brazilian nation-state. White schooling in Indigenous worlds. Specific and differentiated Indigenous school education. Multiethnicity, plurality, and diversity.

The formation of a distinct and dense halo around the legislation and the contents of African and Indigenous history indicates that legal mandates act as curricular drivers. However, the concentration of these themes within a specific cluster suggests that, in some cases, they are still treated as isolated content, reinforcing the need to strengthen their transversalization and the interdisciplinary approach observed in the yellow halo.

Figure 2 presents an infographic that synthesizes the main thematic cores of each halo and the predominant type of approach (direct or indirect).

Figure 2 – Main themes and type of approach according to each halo



Source: Prepared by the authors with the support of the GPT-4 tool.

The infographic shows that the different thematic axes of Ethnic-Racial Education (ERER) present in teacher education programs in the Humanities at federal universities in Brazil's Northeast contribute to a diverse, complex, and critical form of training. These axes promote the recognition of the historical, social, and political contributions of Black and Indigenous peoples. It is also evident that these contents are addressed through direct, indirect, or mixed approaches, combining explicit references to the National Curriculum Guidelines for Ethnic-Racial Education (DCN-ERER) with broader themes such as diversity, human rights, and decolonial epistemologies.

The presence of these educational perspectives in the analyzed curricula aligns with the propositions of Gomes (2012), who emphasizes the need for changes in pedagogical practices and for the decolonization of curricula in both basic and higher education within the field of ERER. This process requires articulating material conditions of existence with cultural, social, identity-based, and political dynamics. However, this does not merely involve the inclusion of new topics, but rather the promotion of what Walsh (2010) defines as *critical interculturality*, which questions the power structures that racialize and subordinate specific social groups. Contents such as African epistemologies exemplify this approach and are present, for instance, in the Social Sciences program at the Federal University of Ceará.

Philosophy of Ancestrality and Education. Essential concepts of the African worldview: body, myth, rite, time, and ancestry. Community relations. Importance of place. The need for diversity and alterity. Traditional religiosity and sacredness. Exu: beyond good and evil. Philosophy from the perspective of the African worldview. Ethics and aesthetics. Theoretical-practical pedagogical developments. Laboratory of devices for engaging with the philosophy of ancestrality in education.

The **National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations (DCN-ERER)** emphasize the need to expand access to information about the diversity of the Brazilian nation and the reconstruction of identities, breaking with negative images historically attributed to Black and Indigenous peoples, as well as recognizing the participation of these groups in the history of Brazil (BRASIL, 2003, 2004, 2008). In this sense, the presence of this approach in course syllabi is fundamental to the effective

implementation of the DCN. However, it is important to stress that, in the daily classroom context, teachers must be attentive to the process of deconstructing these representations, especially in the teaching of content related to the colonial period and slavery, which have traditionally been marked by such symbolisms. The adoption of a decolonial perspective proves to be strategic, since the representation of Black and Indigenous peoples in positions of subalternity contributes to the perpetuation of racism (Corenza, 2021).

For this reason, it is important that struggles and social movements be included as content in the curricular frameworks of teacher education programs, as exemplified by the History Teaching Degree at the Federal University of Western Bahia:

Course: Teaching, History, and Afro-Brazilian Culture. Study of historiography and the history of Brazil, starting from its African matrices. The role of Africa and Africans in Brazilian cultural formation. The struggles of the Black population and social and affirmative action movements. The promotion of conceptual and didactic tools capable of supporting the teaching of the history of Afro-Brazilian cultures, highlighting their affinities with the history of Africa, with the aim of complying with Law 10.639/03. Course component with practice to be carried out in public Basic Education.

Courses such as this are in accordance with the implementation of Laws No. 10.639/03 and No. 11.645/08, since their adoption constitutes a concrete way of confronting institutional racism that is still present within school structures.

It is observed that discussions about national formation and Brazilian identity in the analyzed curricula occur, for the most part, indirectly, as exemplified by the Geography program at the Federal University of Maranhão: “Course: State and Society. State and ideology. Relations of power and domination. Elite theory. The world of work. Education, citizenship, and emancipation. Social movements. Public policies and the empowerment of minority groups.”

Although it does not explicitly mention ethnic-racial relations, the course adopts, as mandatory bibliography, the work of Sueli Carneiro (2003), thereby evidencing an indirect approach to the theme. This strategy reflects a broader pattern within the educational system, in which the curriculum, as pointed out by Sacristán (2000) and Corenza (2021), expresses specific interests and is configured as an instrument of power and symbolic

4 Final considerations

The analysis of licensure curricula in the field of Human Sciences at federal universities in Northeastern Brazil points to both advances and challenges in the implementation of EREER, revealing an uneven incorporation of the DCN-ERER guidelines across institutions and programs. The results indicate that ethnic-racial content is included in diverse ways, ranging from central and direct approaches to indirect and broader perspectives articulated with themes such as human rights, diversity, gender, and decolonial epistemologies.

Despite these advances, teacher education still presents restricted and insufficiently in-depth approaches to these themes, which calls for revision, given that teachers play a central role in the deconstruction of racist narratives. In this regard, the adoption of a decolonial perspective becomes essential.

This study presents limitations insofar as it is based on documentary analysis and does not encompass extracurricular activities or pedagogical practices carried out in the classroom. In addition, it depends on the availability and access to Pedagogical Course Projects (PPCs), some of which were unavailable.

The present analysis aimed to understand how teacher education institutions incorporate the DCN-ERER and Laws No. 10.639/2003 and No. 11.645/2008 into licensure curricula. Considering the central role of teachers in adopting critical educational strategies committed to ethnic-racial diversity, it is evident that these professionals are key actors in the construction of a more inclusive education, capable of responding to the complexity of Brazilian diversity.

Finally, in light of the findings, it is argued that it is vital for the coordination of licensure programs, as well as the Structuring Teaching Committees of higher education institutions, to continuously review pedagogical course projects in order to align graduate profiles with this urgent need.

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