# CHINESE MIGRANTS: IDENTITIES CONVEYED IN REFRACTED DISCOURSE

*MIGRANTES CHINESES: IDENTIDADES EXPRESSAS EM DISCURSO REFRATADO*

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper aimed at addressing the discursive representation of Chinese migrants, according to the perspective conveyed in narratives enunciated by Chinese migrants themselves and by Brazilians on Chinese migrants. For that, theoretical foundation on narrative analysis (LABOV; WALETSKY, 1997[1967]; LABOV, 1972), immigrant discourse (PASTOR; DE FINA, 2005) and critical perspective of Orientalism (SAID, 2003[1978]) was used. For the analysis, three narratives of interviews conducted during a PhD research were selected, enunciated by two Brazilians and one Chinese, all language teachers and living in Brazil at the time. The narratives were assessed based on a proposed macrodiscursive and microdiscursive analysis model of narratives derived from the discussion by Pastor and De Fina (2005). As a result, it was observed that identity perspectives enunciated by both Chinese and Brazilians are mostly arising from reflected and refracted discourse based on ingrained culture simulacrum, that is, stigmatized discourse on the Chinese population. Although the complexity inherent to linguistic interaction, particularly regarding intercultural entanglements, were not exhaustively discussed, it is hoped that this work may contribute to broaden understandings on identity aspects of intercultural nature.
**Keywords:** Discourse analysis; narrative; intercultural relations; Chinese.

**RESUMO:** Este artigo tem o objetivo de analisar a representação discursiva dos migrantes chineses, conforme a perspectiva expressa em narrativas enunciadas pelos próprios migrantes chineses e por brasileiros sobre os migrantes chineses. Para isso, são utilizados aportes teóricos acerca de análise da narrativa (LABOV; WALETSKY, 1997[1967]; LABOV, 1972), de discurso de imigrantes (PASTOR; DE FINA, 2005) e de perspectiva crítica do orientalismo (SAID, 2003[1978]). Para a análise, foram destacadas três narrativas resultantes de entrevistas empreendidas durante pesquisa de doutorado, enunciadas por dois brasileiros e por um chinês, professores de idiomas e morando no Brasil à época. As narrativas foram apreciadas conforme o modelo proposto de análise macrodiscursiva e microdiscursiva de narrativas, baseado na discussão de Pastor e De Fina (2005). Como resultado, verificou-se que as perspectivas identitárias enunciadas tanto por chineses quanto por brasileiros são majoritariamente decorrentes de discurso refletido e refratado baseado em simulacro de cultura estanque, isto é, discurso estigmatizado sobre a população chinesa. Embora a complexidade inerente às

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interações linguísticas, particularmente no tocante às imbricações interculturais, não tenha sido exaustivamente explorada, espera-se que este trabalho possa contribuir para ampliar entendimentos acerca de aspectos identitários de ordem intercultural.

**Palavras-chave:** Análise do discurso; narrativa; relações interculturais; chineses.

# 1 Introduction

Historical background prior to the migratory movement of Chinese people to Brazil in the twenty-first century has shown there has been some feeling of sinophobia widely spread in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. (Cf. SANDMEYER, 1991; DYATLOV, 2012; CZEPULA, 2016). As some enduring resistance to interaction with the Chinese population seems to be apparent in some contexts in the Brazilian society, this paper aimed at addressing the discursive representation of Chinese migrants, according to the perspective conveyed in narratives enunciated by Chinese migrants themselves and by Brazilians on Chinese migrants. As a starting point, it is necessary to understand that the dialogical expressiveness about a person or a group of people does not occur in a univocal way, but is imbued with intercultural expectations that often unnoticed, as they are tacitly accepted or taken for granted.

Having said that, the analysis will focus on elements of discursive narrative construction, and its intercultural dimension will be studied particularly in relation to intersections between Brazilian and Chinese cultures. For that, theoretical foundation on narrative analysis (LABOV; WALETSKY, 1997[1967]; LABOV, 1972), immigrant discourse (PASTOR; DE FINA, 2005) and critical perspective of Orientalism (SAID, 2003[1978]) was used.

For the analysis, three narratives of interviews conducted during a PhD research were selected[2], enunciated by two Brazilians and one Chinese, all language teachers and living in Brazil at the time. The narratives were assessed based on a proposed macrodiscursive and microdiscursive analysis model of narratives derived from the discussion by Pastor and De Fina (2005).

The paper is organized as follows: section 2 presents the perspective of dialogical expressiveness in narratives, based on the Labovian structure of narratives (LABOV; WALETSKY, 1997[1967]; LABOV, 1972) and revisited concepts; section 3 specifically presents the proposed macrodiscursive and microdiscursive analysis model of narratives derived from the discussion by Pastor and De Fina (2003), and also briefly presents some evaluation narrative moves (CORTAZZI; JIN, 2001); section 4 describes the methodology designed for this paper; section 5 contextualizes the discussion of discursive construction of narratives by migrants, based on a model of identity projection; section 6 presents the three selected narrative excerpts and discusses the results regarding the conveyed meaning of culture simulacrum and evaluation in refracted speech;  and section 7 offers some final remarks on the discussion provided by this paper.

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[2] Interviews conducted during the PhD research were approved according to Document Nr. 14/2018, dated 16 August 2018, issued by the Research Ethics Committee at PUC-Rio (CEPq/PUC-Rio); and followed all ethical standards prescribed by our legislation, namely Resolution of the National Health Council (CNS) Nr. 466, dated 12 December 2012 and Resolution of the National Health Council (CNS) Nr. 510, dated 7 April 2016.

## 2 Dialogical expressiveness in narratives

The formal model of sociolinguistic narrative analysis was developed by Labov and Waletsky (1997[1967]) and Labov (1972), and is based on the analysis of verbal sequences and sequences of events, according to the structure Abstract, Orientation, Complicating action, Evaluation (external evaluation and embedded evaluation), Result and Coda. These elements were conceptualized as follows by Labov (1972): (a) Abstract –  one or two sentences summarizing the whole story; (b) Orientation –  identification of the scenario, characters and their activity or situation, either in an initial group of sentences or in sparse sentences throughout the narrative; (c) Complicating action –  element that triggers the narrative plot, as a time sequence with at least two actions in the past; (d) Evaluation – indicated by the narrator as the high point of a story; (e) Result –  unfolding of the narrative; and (f) Coda – free sentences at the end of the narrative, with general observations or revealing the effect of events on the narrator.

This model, however, has been revisited and reformulated in the light of complementary discussions, since it tends to neglect non-canonical discursive genres, as indicated by Bastos and Biar (2015). As pillars of this debate, it is given that (a) the complicating action is considered by Labov (1972) as the only essential element to the constitution of the narrative; (b) the evaluation offers support to explain the reason of the narrative effort, through its reportability aspect, and differentiates between a narrative and a simple report; and (c) the minimum time sequence must consist of at least two action verbs in the past.

On the time sequence, Bastos (2008) partially corroborates the debate perspective stated here, arguing that, to be considered a narrative, there must be at least two actions reported in sequence, regardless of the verb tense.  She explains that

> inspired by the classical Labovian proposal, I considered that the minimum criterion necessary to decide whether a particular segment of speech is (or not) a narrative was the presence of at least two events in a time sequence.  But unlike the Labovian model, such events need not necessarily be in the past, nor syntactically articulated in independent sentences, with action verbs in the past. (BASTOS, 2008, p. 78)[3]

On narrative structure, Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (2008) consider that there are not only main ("big") stories, but also small stories, which can be considered as relevant or more relevant than the main story to understand the interactional context, that is, to investigate the identities projected by the speakers in that context. Since these small stories are usually constructed in moments of informality, they may reveal more elements that reveal a stance of identity projection. Bastos (2008) considers that small stories are closer to the canonical Labovian model and may be inserted in bigger stories.

For Georgakopoulou (2013), at first, a small story seems to be a dichotomous concept,

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[3] Original: "inspirada na proposta laboviana clássica, considerei que o critério mínimo necessário para decidir se um determinado segmento de fala é (ou não) narrativa foi a presença de pelo menos dois eventos em sequência temporal. Mas diferente do modelo laboviano, tais eventos não precisam estar necessariamente no passado, nem articulados sintaticamente em orações independentes, com verbos de ação no passado" (BASTOS, 2008, p. 78). All translations by the author of this paper, unless otherwise noted.

since it comprises any narrative segment other than the canonical narrative or life story. For the author, the most determining or relevant characteristic for the narrative would be the propagation of the story, through its reportability potential. Regarding other components, Richards (1999) points out that orientation, as previously conceptualized, is more common when there is no shared context, as in situations of research interviews.

When considering the elements discussed about the narrative structure, one should pay attention to the analysis of textual sequences, which may take on different functions, as Riessman (2008) enumerates: (1) mobilizing groups (political function); 2) arguing (some people use stories to illustrate or even report something); 3) persuading an audience (rhetorical function); 4) engaging the public; 5) entertaining; and 6) dissuading or dissimulating. In this sense, with the intention of encompassing the complexity of the data generated in a narrative research, Riessman (2008) assumes a more pluralistic perspective of narrative analysis, arguing that complementary methodologies and resources may be used.

The author enunciates four primary approaches of narrative analysis, namely: (a) thematic analysis, which treats narratives as units that can boost individual and group identities; (b) structural analysis, in which there is fragmentation of the discourse to unravel structural elements; (c) dialogic / performance analysis, in which the collaborative construction of narratives is considered a perspective that comprises hybrid analysis, with contribution from other analysis types; and (d) visual analysis, where visual and textual elements are considered in an integrated way.

The data generation environment is relevant, since, in a given interaction, the participant tends to modulate his speech, so that it meets what (s)he thinks is expected of him / her, then there can be correspondence with the expectations of other participants. As explained by Bastos and Biar (2015),

> the social actor "knows" in which situations the stories are allowed / required; what may or may not be told in a social situation; how the experience told will be distributed among the social actors who heard it (in this regard, see Sacks 1984). (BASTOS; BIAR, 2015, p. 107)[4]

Riessman (1993) postulates that data generation starts before the actual transcription or even recording of events, since the choice of the context in which the interview or even the selection of questions will take place already directs the result of the research. In this sense, the participant is not solely responsible for the constitution of the self, because the report of experience may not necessarily represent an undisputed truth, or for some researchers, partial truths.

The experiences are not given, but co-constructed based on the interpretation that each individual has about a given event. The social world and its established meanings are formed by the innumerable ways in which an individual builds his relations with another, with himself, and with the world around him / her. Therefore, it is necessary to interpret events according to the meaning attributed by individuals who have lived the interactional experience (DENZIN; LINCOLN, 1999). The data generation is essential for the researcher, because it

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[4] Original: "o ator social 'sabe' em que situações são permitidas/requeridas as histórias; o que pode ou não ser contado em uma situação social; de que modo a experiência contada será distribuída entre os atores sociais que puderam ouvi-la (a esse respeito, ver Sacks 1984)". (BASTOS e BIAR, 2015, p. 107)

allows for the identification of elements not glimpsed in an abstract perspective, dissociated from the discursive practice.

In this context, particularly in relation to the migrants' narrative, De Fina and Tseng (2017) argue that the narratives may be used as resources to recount traumatic or emotional experiences they had in the relocation process. These reports reveal values and projected identity of the migrant, whose speech reflects and refracts ways of thinking and acting. These authors also highlight how translation issues can modulate narratives, which are mostly translated into English. In relation to this question of translation, in particular, it should be clarified that, ultimately, it stems from the retextualization of a text, by presupposing a preliminary interpretive analysis. In this sense, reformulations are carried out in a multilingual order, according to the different cultures, and in a multimodal order, with reformulation of the discourse, taking into account interferences caused by different reasons, migration patterns, labor market integration processes, among others.

In the interviews conducted in this research, which is part of PhD dissertation, this perspective can be interpreted as a trend towards more direct discourse – by the Chinese, who expressed themselves in English – probably as a result of the language barrier. For this paper, my analysis focused on the identity projection of migrants in relation to the culture of his / her counterpart.

## 3 Macrodiscursive and microdiscursive analysis model of narratives

The analysis model of Pastor and De Fina (2005), based on the proposals of Labov and Waletzky (1997[1967]) and Ochs and Capps (2001), was used in this paper because it offers subsidies to also help understand inter-space relations characteristic of displacement situations. In this paper, this model was called "Narrative model of interaction in migration situations" and was schematized as indicated below, based on macro- and microdiscursive elements:

| Macrodiscursive Elements | Orientation (OR) | | |
| | Complicating Action (CA) | Complicating Events (CE) | |
| | | Reactions (RE) | Psychological Responses (Psy) |
| | | | Verbal Responses (Verb) |
| | | | Action Responses (Act) |
| | | Resolution (RES) | |
| | Evaluation (EV) | Explicit (Exp) | Clauses interrupting the report of actions or clauses at the end of narratives |
| | | Embedded (Emb) | Reported speech |
| | | | Emotional language |
| Microdiscursive elements | Linguistic and paralinguistic aspects | pronouns, determinants, voice of a verb, capitalization, intonation, gender, affixes, repetition, alliteration, verb variation, word order, code switching, facial expression, body language, prosodic elements, lexical forms, syntactic forms | |

Figure 01 – Macrodiscursive and microdiscursive analysis model of narratives
Source: Author's own elaboration based on Pastor and De Fina (2005)

As shown in Chart 02, the authors categorized two levels of analysis, called here macrodiscursive elements and microdiscursive elements: the macrodiscursive elements are precisely those that indicate the positioning of the speaker in the interaction situation, when reporting and evaluating the event; and the microdiscursive elements, in turn, are indicative of sensory experiences at the moment of interaction.

The Orientation (OR) presents contextual information of the narrative and may vary according to the degree of sharing of the communicative situation, that is, whether the interaction occurs between / among people with common experiences or not.

Complicating Events (CE) are the events themselves that cause strangeness or raise questions in a given communication.

Reactions (RE) comprise psychological responses (*Psy*), verbal responses (*Verb*) or action responses (*Act*). The *Psy* constitute reflective or proactive thoughts in order to solve the impasse of the CE; the *Verb* are words effectively enunciated for intervention, in an attempt to solve the event enunciated as CE; and the *Act* are the actions undertaken for this same objective.

The Resolution (RES) is the outcome of the narrative, a moment in which the given complicating event is solved, either by engagement of all parties or by the action of one interlocutor only.

Evaluations (EV) are conceptualizations about a given event, which may be explicit or embedded, as indicated in the model above.  It is noted that Pastor and De Fina (2005) highlight that the categories Evaluation (EV) and Reactions (RE) can often be considered overlapping. For this reason, it was decided to classify as EV the passages that interrupt reports of actions or that are positioned at the end of narratives, and the other reflective passages were considered RE.

Regarding the microdiscursive elements of Pastor and De Fina (2005), the aspects listed in Chart 02 comprise morphological and syntactic order modulations, such as voice of a verb; semantic, as code change; and pragmatic, as prosodic elements. These elements, in addition to indicating sensory experiences, as previously explained, tend to signal emphases during narratives, in relation to passages with a more expressive traumatic or emotional content (Cf. DE FINA; TSENG, 2017). In this sense, they are particularly used in discursive situations of evaluation, a theme explored as follows.

*3.1 Evaluation in narrative discourse*

In order to better understand how the group of Chinese and Brazilian interviewees evaluate the counterpart of another culture, it is important to analyze how the evaluation occurs in the narrative discourse and motivates expectations in relation to the interlocutors.  The evaluation assumptions enunciated by Cortazzi and Jin (2001) will be used as subsidies to understand the narratives of immigrants regarding aspects arising from culture simulacrum, a concept proposed based on the intercultural theory of Cavan (2006), defined as the projected identity in an antagonistic way or in opposition to certain characteristics of another culture, although with few subsidies for support.

Regarding evaluation, it is necessary to be aware of group patterns, alignment and expectations of the speech community. Worthom and Rhodes (2015, p. 170) explain that

> The evaluative functions of a narrative also often presuppose cross-event chains. For example, the voicing and evaluation of a social group in a characteristic way presupposes other events in which that group, and perhaps others, have been thus positioned. (WORTHOM; RHODES, 2015, p. 170)

The evaluation is precisely derived from the way in which the interlocutor interprets his / her participation, based on his emotional filter (cf. BASTOS, 2005), relative not only to his own experiences, but also to the external context of his / her performance, tacit, originated from the values shared by people of his / her culture.

This expansion of expectations can occur in different ways, depending on the communication situation. In the pedagogical context, Cortazzi and Jin (2001) defend the instances of evaluation <in> the narrative, evaluation <of> the narrative and evaluation <through> the narrative, as follows: (a) evaluation <in> the narrative – individuals interacting in the construction of the narrative; (b) evaluation <of> the narrative – individuals evaluating the narrative, after the finished construction, if it is reportable; and (c) evaluation <through> the narrative – projection of the narrator persona. These processes will be relevant to understand the scope of discursive relations built by migrants, addressed in the following topic.

## 4 Methodology

As a research starting point for the analysis carried out in this paper, (1) some historical background on Chinese migration worldwide was gathered and it pointed out to the fact that the feeling of sinophobia was widely spread in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Cf. SANDMEYER, 1991; DYATLOV, 2012; CZEPULA, 2016). Then (2) theories of narrative analysis (LABOV; WALETSKY, 1997[1967]; LABOV, 1972), immigrant discourse (PASTOR; DE FINA, 2005) and critical perspective of Orientalism (SAID, 2003[1978]) were used to address intercultural issues, and (3) propose a macrodiscursive and microdiscursive analysis model of narratives derived from the discussion by Pastor and De Fina (2003). After that, (4) three narratives were selected from interviews conducted during a PhD research, then these data were discussed (5) regarding the discursive construction of narratives by migrants and (6) regarding the culture simulacrum and evaluation in refracted speech.

Regarding the narratives, three excerpts were selected from a total of 44 narrative excerpts extracted from the interviews conducted during the PhD research. All narratives refer to events in the past and were transcribed according to the conventions proposed by Bastos and Biar (2015), as follows:

## TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| ... | unmeasured pause |
| . | descending intonation or end of utterance |
| ? | ascending intonation |
| , | continuing intonation |
| - | glottal stop |
| = | contiguous utterances, without a pause between them |
| **underlined** | emphatic stress |
| **CAPS** | higher tone of voice or very emphatic stress |
| °**word**° | lower tone of voice |
| >**word**< | talk produced at a faster pace |
| <**word**> | talk produced at a slower pace |
| : or :: | elongation |
| [ | starting point of speech overlap |
| ] | ending point of speech overlap |
| (    ) | inaudible utterance |
| ((    )) | analyst comment, description of non-verbal activity |
| "**word**" | reported speech, reconstruction of a dialogue |
| **hh** | aspiration or laughter |
| ↑ | intonation rise |
| ↓ | intonation fall |

Conventions based on studies of Conversation analysis (SACKS; SCHEGLOFF; JEFFERSON, 1974), incorporating symbols suggested by Schifrin (1987) and Tannen (1989).

**Figure 02** – Transcription conventions
**Source:** Bastos and Biar (2015, my translation)

Those steps are shown in the figure below, as a way to provide a general overview of the methodology designed for this paper:
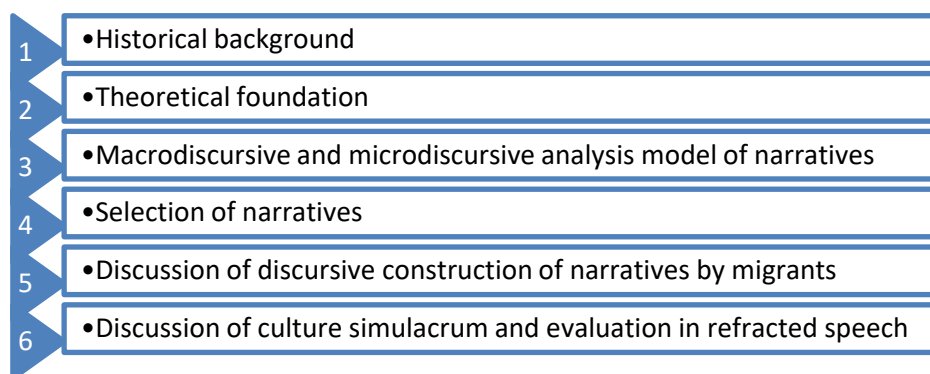
| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | • Historical background |
| 2 | • Theoretical foundation |
| 3 | • Macrodiscursive and microdiscursive analysis model of narratives |
| 4 | • Selection of narratives |
| 5 | • Discussion of discursive construction of narratives by migrants |
| 6 | • Discussion of culture simulacrum and evaluation in refracted speech |

**Figure 03**: Overview of methodology design
**Source:** Author's own elaboration

## 5 Discursive construction of narratives by migrants

When considering narratives as stories told in order to recreate meanings, the tacit judgment of their relevance in a given context, that is, their degree of reportability, stands out. As stated by Norrick (2005), the narrator tells the story relating it to his own experiences and, in this narrative process, the report is designed to meet the expectations of the speaker as an identity projection. On this, Dyer and Keller-Cohen (2000) explain that

> narrative allows us to construct the self in a number of ways. For example, the act of narrating allows us to reflect and talk about our actions in the past, and to edit, correct and interpret them in the telling. (DYER; KELLER-COHEN, 2000, p. 285)

Cavan (2006) corroborates this perception by saying that "identity is a process as Greene (1995) says and one that is forever shaping and becoming if it has the space and the passageways to do so." (CAVAN, 2006, p. 69)

In this context, we consider the instance of projection of identities as refracted elements materialized by the agency expression in a narrative, that is, by the intention of projecting a meaning determined in function of the assumed expectations of the interlocutor.

This proposed model can be best visualized in the next image, in which the assumed expectations are managed by the speaker, at the time of negotiation, in order to project a refracted sense, where the identity space defined in the interlocution has undergone modifications according to the internalized or externalized perception of the interlocutor.
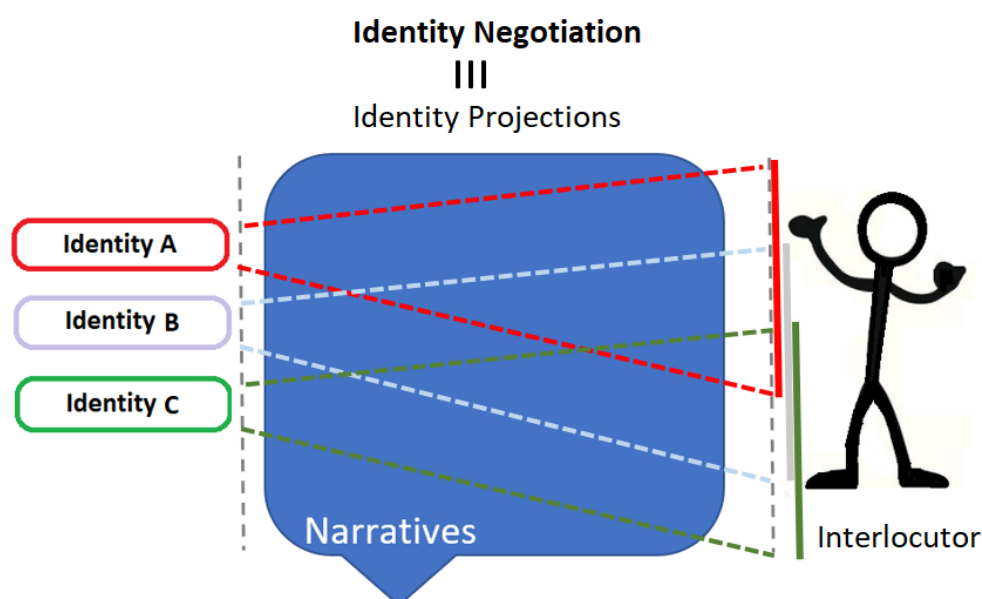
## MODEL OF IDENTITY PROJECTION



**Figure 04** – Model of Identity Projection
**Source**: Author's own elaboration

It is worth noting, however, that the concept of identity addressed here does not assume it as a univocal or finished entity, but presupposes a communicative agency in the sense of negotiating cultural concepts, or culture simulacra, through enunciative choices during interaction, a movement also referred to as performance in the literature. (Cf. BUTLER, 1990)

In addition to this perception, Schieffelin (1990) advocates that socialization would be a consequence of interaction. In other words, the interaction generates sharp perceptions about valued elements in a given society, which provides that the interactants may establish more lasting bonds, then socialize by creating networks of contacts and experiences.

When sharing a narrative, the narrator makes it from assumptions built up throughout his life experience. Therefore, the expression of identity constitution is intrinsic to narratives, whether from an individual or group point of view, shared by all members.

Considering these identity complexities, Cavan (2006) used a method of analyzing intercultural narratives based on the assumption that, although immigrant participants integrate different social spaces in their communities, all face preconceived positions and barriers to socialization. This reality would most likely be modified only by a process of acculturation-enculturation, according to which the culture of the migrant would be valued and effectively integrated. Such processes would aim at the "inclusion" of the immigrant in the new culture.

However, even inclusion does not prevent distancing, because by including, the immigrant culture is relatively "erased" to become mainstream (Cf. REVUZ, 1998). In this struggle for "acceptance", sometimes migrants begin to occupy an inter-space, called by Cavan (2006) "between area", in which the conceptions of language, culture and identity are negotiated socially.

It is common, for example, in Asian communities in the United States that descendants of second generation Chinese no longer see themselves as Asians and come to call themselves "bananas" (white inside and yellow outside), as opposed to a concept, also pejorative, of "boiled egg" (yellow on the inside and white on the outside). These nicknames are explained by Cummings and Wolf (2011, p. 11 and p. 14), as cited by Wolf and Polzenhagen (2014, p. 148), in the following way:

> *banana.* definition: a westernized Chinese person (derogatory). text example: "The use of bamboo also has the connotation of being Chinese. This is similar to the analogy of a banana, which is yellow outside but the inside is white, which is used to describe Chinese people who are born in the 'West' and therefore 'whitened'"(CUMMINGS; WOLF, 2011, p. 11).

> *boiled egg.* definition: a Chinesized Western person (derogatory), with reference to skin color. text example: "Boiled egg, white outside, yellow inside" (CUMMINGS; WOLF, 2011, p. 14)

In this context, it is important to briefly discuss the process of possible assimilation (or not) of cultures. In recent years, inclusive policies have been more common, in various contexts, but the practice of these ideologies does not take place in a satisfactory way. The underlying cultural factors, which misleads or even hinder inclusive practices, may be considered more preponderant.

The spaces effectively occupied by individuals are no longer so determinant in social relations, perhaps due to the diffusion of the technical-scientific-informational environment (SANTOS, 1997 and 2001), that is, a kind of space construction that aggregates transformations of nature, in the sense that people no longer need to belong to a particular locus, only to be connected to a communications network that allows the exchange of products and other factors, and decreasing operational costs. Similarly, identity itself may no longer be understood as mainly spatially situated, but according to concepts of groups instead, even if displaced. In other words, it is not <being somewhere> that confers identity, but the <exercise of a set of values> of a group, which can be anywhere, in a globalized world.

In proposing his intercultural model, Cavan (2006), as previously mentioned, works on four axes:

(a) personal (Cf. CLANDININ; CONNELLY, 2000) – related to the experience of the interlocutor;

(b) temporal (cf. CLANDININ; CONNELLY, 2000) – related to the continuum of experience, in a diachronic time-frame, considering past, present and future;

(c) locational (Cf. CLANDININ; CONNELLY, 2000) – related to the site of the experiment; and

(d) intercultural (Cf. CARGER, 2005) – arising from the identity switch in the continuum.

The individual experience in an intercultural context would therefore be a refraction of the lived experiences, consolidated in the refracted image of the self, a perspective explained by Cavan (2006), according to the ideas of Grumet (1991), as follows:

> the process of narrative is like **looking in a distant mirror**. The mirror reflects one's life allowing us to learn from this reflection. [...] Grumet emphasizes that life is multiple accounts and narrative allows us to reveal these accounts in such a way that we become free from one story framed by the power system. (CAVAN, 2006, p. 104, my emphasis)

This system of power, as cited by Cavan (2006), refers to the cultural framework of a given society, ultimately stemming from the soft power policies of dominant powers. Thus, it can be inferred that the identity constitution of an individual, as well as that of a particular group, is not based only on linear conceptions about a given culture or communicative event, but, more than that, relates to a movement of reflection and refraction to what has been experienced in a continuum, that is, past, present and future, in a space co-built by all parties involved in the interaction. This perception will motivate instances of culture simulacrum, as explored in the following section.

## 6 Culture simulacrum: the paradigm of orientalism

At first, it should be clarified that, as stated by Blommaert (2008), the patterns of power and inequality are changing, and becoming increasingly complex. As a consequence, there is

greater connection between speech, whether spoken or written, and the social structure; and certain social positions of the individual are evidenced by the way (s)he speaks and the way (s)he deals with the other during conversation.

In this context, the fragmentation of society, as explained by Biar (2012), is demonstrated, in accordance with the statement by the School of Chicago (Cf. SIMMEL, 1973[1903]), by a "blasé attitude", which indicates belonging to different worlds of meaning. The stigmatized person, aware of the fact that (s)he does not share the same universe as a certain individual taken as a standard (or "normal"), can assume modulated postures, which project another expressiveness of themselves, in order to maintain the interaction in progress (GOFFMAN, 1963). In the words of Goffman (1963, p. 194), "the asymmetries or differences between the roles that do exist are often kept within such limits as will further the common and crucial task of maintaining the social situation that is in progress". That is considered a mixed meeting, as proposed by Goffman (1963), referring to the narrated situations (narrated world) and not to the research situation (narrative world). According to Bamberg's concept (1997, p. 335), the concept of the narrated world is defined as "narratives – particularly those of personal experience – are representations of something that once happened and what this past happening meant (or 'now' means) to the narrator" and narrative world is defined as and "the act of telling – or 'representing' at a particular occasion in the form of a particular story – to intervene, so to speak, between the actual experience and the story".

As globalization intensifies transnational relations, impersonalization emerges as a consequence of a rapid process of urbanization, which leads to a fragmentation of family relations, "disaggregation of kinship networks and reciprocity" in view of individuals taking a more individualistic and isolationist stance. (Cf. BIAR, 2015)

Although motivated by the social context, such as spatial segregation, the stigma is actually sedimented by the very attitude of the interlocutors, who see themselves as detached from what would be expected of them. This is an emic perspective, in which the participants themselves have and project a point of view about themselves (GARCEZ, 2008), that is, demonstrate the image they have internalized about them. These individuals end up doing what they think other people expect of them and occupy the spaces they consider to be destined for them in society. For example, a percentage of people in the peripheral zone tend to want to work and live in the same peripheral zone, because they think this is expected of them and they cannot "fight against the system". (Cf. OLIVEIRA, 2012)

In the case of migrants, this stigmatization may occur due to a gap in knowledge of intercultural aspects. As recommended by UNESCO (2013), it is necessary to seek the development of intercultural competences, whose main concepts – cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and human rights – are, in fact, grounded in issues of culture and language. When illustrating these assumptions in a tree diagram, the above-mentioned main concepts (operational steps) are represented as the stem; the foundational elements as roots; and the other competencies as leaves. (Cf. UNESCO, 2013, p. 22)

It is important to stress that the proper integration of these elements allows a process of transculturation, as described by Walter (2009), in which there is equalization of cultures, related intra- and interculturally, in their pre-modern, modern and postmodern interfaces. It is a time of accommodating a hybrid culture, which has been modified through interactions between two different communities, through intercultural exchanges. At that moment, it is possible to say that there has been integration of different cultures in a given society.

In this intercultural context, Western and Eastern cultures often tend to be polarized, historically, a relationship widely explored by Said (2003[1978]), who coined the concept of 'Orientalism', according to which the Western culture is considered "standard", and it is socially authorized to describe the "Eastern world", colonizing it and governing it. As a result of this discrepancy, "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self." (SAID, 2003[1978], p.3). More than that, Said argues that the geographical and cultural concept of Orientalism is a creation, in which "locales, regions, geographical sectors as 'Orient' and 'Occident' are man-made". (ibidem, p.5). The author complements that "the two geographical entities thus support and to an extent reflect each other". (ibidem, p.5)

Particularly in the case of Eastern immigrants, there is a tendency to show further distance from their Western counterpart due to an ingrained culture simulacrum that forges a concept of Orientalism, stemming from historical generalizations according to which, as Said (2003[1978]) argues, European culture would have strengthened its differentiation.

This differentiation is clear in the discourse of the Brazilian and Chinese interviewees, who always refer to aspects of their cultures in an essentialist way. Participant Karina, a Portuguese teacher and PhD candidate at the time, had lived with a Chinese woman in her home in Brazil, and reported, in her interview, how she perceived a certain rejection particularly towards Chinese people, somewhat distinct from the way other groups of foreigners were referred by people she knew. According to the postulated by Said (2003[1978]), this characterization of Western culture, materialized in European culture as "more civilized", tends to a behavior of reproduction of stigma in relation to people of certain cultures, as shown in the excerpt 43 below:

**EXCERPT 43: Cultural strangeness 2 – Karina**

(Participant Karina, 00:09:11-00:11:32)

| 001 | Rafaela: | A::nd in which way from a general perspective, a a-> in a general way |
|---|---|---|
| 002 | | actually in a more detailed way, right? the opposite< in which way do you |
| 003 | | ASSESS (.) your experience with her? With this person who lived with |
| 004 | | you? With the Chinese girl? |
| 005 | Karina: | So I think it was GOOD because it opened my eyes to, to this prejudice that |
| 006 | | I had not seen BEFORE↓(.) so I have alwa::ys, as I have told you on that |
| 007 | | day during class (1,0) I SEE that for example IN BRAZIL we |
| 008 | | NOWADAYS have a very STRONG discourse tha::t (1,0) about being |
| 009 | | politically correct regarding SEVERAL minority groups↓ but I DO NOT |
| 010 | | SEE THIS towards the Chinese↓ And I think I wouldn't have <NOTICED> |
| 011 | | it if I had not lived with (.) you know? So, for example, nowadays I SEE |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 012 | | that we have a major concern about what we talk about SEVERAL groups |
| 013 | | which are- are stigmatized↓ we fight against <strong- ly> against that- |
| 014 | | THIS DISCOURSE of prejudi::ce↓ of ha::te↓ o::f and of marginalization↓ |
| 015 | | and I <DO NOT see this towards some foreigners> (.) you know? Then I |
| 016 | | have also changed a lot the con- (1,0) I MEAN the perspective I had |
| 017 | | regarding the Brazilians↓ we used to hea- I used to hear "oh, it is because |
| 018 | | <Brazilians> are a pe::ople tha::t (1,0) welcomes foreigners VERY WELL, |
| 019 | | that Brazilia::ns ↑ a::re (1,0) are a <welcoming> people, that Brazilians are |
| 020 | | a pe::ople (1,0) I mean, which are <cheerful> (1,0) then I see that <FOR |
| 021 | | some types> of foreigners YES (.) and for other types NO, for OTHER |
| 022 | | OTHER types this was VERY salient to  me (1,0) you know? With |
| 023 | | Chine::se (.) with Peru::vians (.) wi::th (.) ANYWAY↓ Boli::vians, |
| 024 | | Hai::tians (.) then I guess I started to SHARPEN my point of view >on this |
| 025 | | kind of thing< as SOME groups of foreigners ARE ACCEPTED (1,0) and |
| 026 | | well-REGARDED, WELCOME in Brazil↑ and other groups ARE |
| 027 | | definitely NOT, for some reason, because >maybe< in a in a (1,0) >well as |
| 028 | | I think of it < there are several IDEAS which EXPLAIN this behavior↓ |
| 029 | | BU::T (1,0) I think I would not have noticed THIS if I had not LIVED |
| 030 | | WITH, if I had not in a way TAKEN SIDES at several moments, right? |

From this narrative excerpt, it is inferred that the interaction presupposes tacit cultural exchanges and, in so far as there are intersections with different cultures, underlying frameworks are made explicit, also based on the analysis of contextualization cues present in the discourse. Such cues, discursive strategies that convey assumptions about what is expected by this culture, are classified by Gumperz (1982) as indicative traits of conventional expectations in a given society, are "any feature of linguistic form that contributes to the signalling of contextual presuppositions." (GUMPERZ, 1982, p.131)

It is important to highlight that contextualization cues are only relevant (signalling value) when there is understanding of the interlocutors, tacit recognition. When it is not understood, this situation may be classified as a social gaffe and can motivate mistaken perceptions about the interlocutor, as explained by Gumperz (1982) in this passage:

> When all participants understand and notice the relevant cues, interpretive processes are then taken for granted and tend to go unnoticed. However, when a listener does not react to a cue or is unaware of its function, interpretations may differ and misunderstanding may occur. It is important to note that when this happens and when a difference in interpretation is brought to a participant's attention, it tends to be seen in attitudinal terms. A speaker is said to be unfriendly, impertinent, rude, uncooperative, or to fail to understand. (GUMPERZ, 1982, p. 153)

These differentiated interpretations are based on different patterns of knowledge and assumptions, parts of the structure of expectations in a given interaction (Cf. TANNEN;

WALLAT, 1987), motivated by the communicative situation itself. The relationship between the two interferes in communication, that is, differentiated knowledge schemes can trigger changes in the frame, the discursive positioning at the moment of interaction.

These expectations take into account the dynamism of an interaction, in which "expectations about objects, people, settings, ways to interact and anything else in the world are continually checked against experience and revised". (TANNEN; WALLAT, 1987, p. 207). It is precisely the point of identity refraction, in which postures are reevaluated according to different communicative demands, which are reprojected or retextualized.

The narrative and the evaluation presuppose different points of view, including from the same interlocutor, and also depend on shared context (or not) by the participants of the interaction. In this sense, it can be said that there is a multilayered perspective, which reflects and refracts points of view. In the words of Cortazzi and Jin (2001, p. 120), "mirrors of multiple senses or tenses of the self", which is aligned with the defended by Cavan (2006).

Despite the relevance of these elements, it should be specifically emphasized that, in this paper, the focus is the narrative built on something that occurred at a previous moment, the narrated world. In other words, it is not analysis of speech-in-interaction, the narrative world, but an analysis of discourse produced in an interview situation, in which the interviewed participant retextualizes the situation experienced and, when delivering his / her speech, leaves cues that signal intended senses in the narrative construction with the interviewer. Thus, although narrative in a research situation is also relevant, this analysis must be dissociated from narrative analysis of the initial interactional situation.

Contextualization cues, therefore, should not be primary elements of analysis, but serve as an auxiliary resource to understand the meanings constructed in the narratives, particularly regarding the interaction between myself and the participants, and how it motivates expectations and the way narratives will be constructed.

In this sense, cultural expectations may be motivated by ingrained culture simulacra, perpetuated by interactional situations which are socially modulated. Said (2003[1978]) theorizes that, "in discussions of the Orient, the Orient is all absence, whereas one feels the Orientalist and what he says as presence; yet we must not forget that the Orientalist's presence is enabled by the Orient's effective absence". (SAID, 2003[1978], p. 208). In this sense, people feel they have "the right" to give their opinion, making a value judgment, a culture simulacrum, even when they are effectively unaware of that culture, and project their own identity as being antagonistic or opposed to certain characteristics.

This distancing ends up strengthening a supposed figure of the "white man", a concept coined by Rudyard Kipling (1954) which, as stated by Said,

> Being a White Man was therefore an idea and a reality. It involved a reasoned position towards both the white and the nonwhite worlds. It meant—in the colonies—speaking in a certain way, behaving according to a code of regulations, and even feeling certain things and not others. It meant specific judgments, evaluations, gestures. It was a form of authority before which nonwhites, and even whites themselves, were expected to bend. (SAID, 2003[1978], p. 227)

Differences between Eastern and Western cultures, in this polarized spectrum, often

arise peculiar curiosity. In this sense, the more expressive presence of Chinese has not gone unnoticed in Rio de Janeiro, a region previously not so inhabited by nationals of this country, unlike Sao Paulo. One evidence of this finding is the choice of the theme of the Rio de Janeiro samba school Imperio Serrano, in 2018: the Empire on the Chinese route. The plot is about a Brazilian person, an *imperiano* (a person who belongs to the Império Serrano samba school), who goes to China, due to the Silk Road project, experiences the Chinese culture and returns to Brazil "Chinesized", celebrating the Chinese New Year (which is just after Carnival time in Brazil).

In addition to China, India, also a BRICS[5] country, was the theme of another samba school song in Rio in Carnival 2018, *Mocidade de Padre Miguel*, whose plot was entitled "Namaste: the star that inhabits me salutes the one that exists in you".

Having two samba schools, in the same year, in Rio de Janeiro, embracing these two Asian cultures is a curious fact. However, the two occurrences do not appear to have been random, but having been arised from a change of perspective of the population, to incorporate Eastern aspects, probably as a result of the perception that there is a larger number of Chinese and Indian nationals in Rio de Janeiro. It can also be said that the plots give an assessment of current discourses in Brazilian society about Chinese and Indians, processes of meaning explored in the following topic.

## 6.1 Evaluation in refracted speech

It should be understood that intercultural expectations occur as a modifying element of relationships, since evaluations about a given culture do not take place in a univocal way, but as a reflected and refracted movement, with the potential to reinforce culture simulacra and stigma. In this sense, the analysis of evaluation instances allows deepening the understanding about identity projections and general beliefs about a given culture.

It is important to highlight, however, that the expectations projected by the researcher's discursive lens as well as the elements of reflexivity (or refraction) in the discourse are impossible to be avoided. As postulated by Blommaert and Dong (2010):

> reflexivity in research: [constitutes] the way in which the observer has an impact on what is observed, and the way in which the observation events themselves are captured in a real historical context, from which they derive meaning and salience. (BLOMMAERT; DONG, 2010, p. 67)

In an intercultural context, therefore, the crosscultural values of a culture B should be taken into account, as they often conflict with already consolidated conceptions of a culture A. Thus, what occurs in an intercultural experience is a kind of mis-en-abyme, in which the systems of two different cultures coexist and interrelate.

For this reason, the intercultural model adopted by Cavan (2006) proposes intercultural axes (CAVAN, 2006) that offer an initial subsidy for the analyses undertaken in this paper. In

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[5] BRICS stands for Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, and refers to a coalition of countries of the Global South, to boost development in these nations.

the case of excerpt 28, interviewee Gustavo interacted with several Chinese people, while all were in an exchange situation in the United States, during a meeting promoted by their residence building administration. Despite having had the opportunity to live with this group of Chinese on a regular basis, Gustavo reported some surprise with a positive appreciation of his interlocutor, indicating that his expectation, considered as "common", would be having a distinct behavior, as explained below:

**EXCERPT 28: Strong opinion on Chinese 5 – Gustavo**

(Participant Gustavo, 00:03:47-00:05:00)

| 001 | Rafaela: | And how was this period I mean, was it interesting <LIVING |
|---|---|---|
| 002 | | TOGETHER> was it <CONFRONTATIONAL>? How |
| 003 | | IMPACTFUL was it at first [being |
| 004 | Gustavo: | For me (1,0) for me it was interesting because:: (1,0) it was a::/a:: |
| 005 | | sort o::f THEY showed themselves (.) in a WAY differently from |
| 006 | | what I >imagined<, I thought that they WERE going to be mo:::re |
| 007 | | (1,0) sort o::f (1,0) stereotypically ASIAN↓ but they showed |
| 008 | | themselves to be VERY VERY VERY open-minded people, |
| 009 | | very:: interested in Western culture, very interested in |
| 010 | | BRAZILIAN culture a::nd in becoming friends and BEING IN |
| 011 | | TOUCH with other cultures, so for me it was VERY interesting. |
| 012 | | I thought that THEY, were going to be a bit STERNER, they |
| 013 | | were, they were NOT going to understand very well, some, things |
| 014 | | that FOR US fro:m fro:m fro:m for us from Brazil (1,0) it is sort |
| 015 | | of common, so some things that we saw as more open, the way of |
| 016 | | acting in a more cheerful way, but they noticed↓ and understood↓ |
| 017 | | and thought that everything was very interesting↓ and they were |
| 018 | | VERY OPEN-MINDED regarding this, so for me it was a::, it was |
| 019 | | a surprise↓ |

As verified, from the Chinese perspective, the reaction takes place as a form of resistance of the Chinese participants, in which cultural expectations are anticipated and there is a reaction of clash between the two cultures, Western and Eastern. According to this discursive perspective, many of the narratives of migrants express agency and victimization, usually expressed from a collective perspective, a factor explored by De Fina (2003). In this research, it was observed that the posture of resistance was basically a reaction to an underlying victimization to what would be a given culture simulacrum about the Chinese.

In this direction, resistance also occurs in instances of identity projection in which Chinese interviewees try to convey the perception that China would be a country with some

renewed posture, as explained in excerpt 21, in which participant Erick, a Mandarin teacher from the Confucius Institute, narrates, during an interview in a research situation, his concern to contrast the cultural and economic panorama of China in more remote times and nowadays.

**EXCERPT 21: China renovation – Erick**

(Participant Erick, 00:20:09-00:21:25)

| 001 | Erick: | I think we have MORE connections with OTHER countries (.) |
|-----|--------|-----------|
| 002 | | MAYBE some some Eurocountries or some countries the people |
| 003 | | there will feel- their their impression, impression of China, is |
| 004 | | about maybe, ten years ago↑, five years ago↑. I didn't know, |
| 005 | | THEY didn't know China is changing VERY much, so this |
| 006 | | information (.) OR NO, or the PAST things (1,0) so, I think China |
| 007 | | IS (.)TRYING, for example, like this program, that China is trying |
| 008 | | to change the minds, change to their people around the world, why |
| 009 | | so many people, around, so many Chinese around the world live |
| 010 | | in different countries? I think China want people to say "oh, there |
| 011 | | is a new China" it's different. It's not like ((incompreensível)), it |
| 012 | | is not poor, not (2,0) DIRTY like that, there are, they are NEW, |
| 013 | | the new generation >I like that< |

The identity projections (reflected and refracted) are a sort of "idealized" model, modulated for the interlocutor, which, in the end, can be defined as a resistance discourse. For example, by signaling a certain tendency to the negative aspect of the Brazilians, the Chinese participant intends to exalt his own identity, as a result of a perspective of reflection and refraction of a culture simulacrum, stigmatized discourse, about Chinese people.

**7 Final remarks**

As shown in narrative excerpts analyzed in this paper, it was observed that identity perspectives enunciated in discourse by both Chinese and Brazilians on Chinese migrants are mostly arising from reflected and refracted discourse deeply founded on ingrained culture simulacrum, that is, stigmatized discourse on the Chinese population.

The analyses particularly focused on the identity projection that was refracted in the discourse of a Chinese living in Brazil, regarding their interaction with Brazilians; and the identity projection that was refracted in the discourse of two Brazilians concerning their interaction with the Chinese. The macrodiscursive and microdiscursive resources used were identified as characteristic of migrant discourse; and evaluation patterns and cultural simulacra shown in discourse point to underlying dialogical expressiveness which are enunciated in

narratives.

As a result, it is possible to say that intercultural expectations at the moment of interaction were found to be greatly motivated by ingrained cultural simulacra (CAVAN, 2006; SAID, 1990), which are elements that tend to create isolation zones in the interaction between Brazilians and Chinese, since they highlight negative characteristics of these cultures.

Although the complexity inherent to linguistic interaction, particularly regarding intercultural entanglements, were not exhaustively discussed, it is hoped that this work may contribute to broaden understandings on identity aspects of intercultural nature.

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