Policy discourses and multi-scalar interactions in curriculum development:
Institutionalizing and translating ethnicity/race issues in Brazilian education
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This chapter presents the methodology and the research design of this study. It explains which concrete events were analyzed, where these events took place, and who the participants were. It also discusses how the collected data were analyzed, what ethical issues were considered, and what the limitations of this approach are. I will start off by briefly highlighting the theoretical foundations of the methodological choices.

3.1 Theoretical Foundations and Methodological Considerations

As briefly mentioned in Chapter 2, in the investigation of social reality in general and ethnicity/race issues in education in particular, the theoretical framework offered by the “cultural political economy of education” (CPE/E) approach (Robertson, 2011; Robertson, 2009) has inspired this work. Based on insights from the “cultural political economy” analysis of social formations, relations, and subjectivities (Jessop, 2004; 2008), CPE/E sees education “not as a pre-given container, or a universal, unchanging, category of social relations and life worlds, but as a complex terrain and outcome of discursive, material and institutionalized struggles over education [...] in the ‘social contract,’ and the scales at which they are governed” (Robertson, 2011: 4). The CPE/E focuses, then, on what Jessop describes as:

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\text{[e]xamining how a given structure may privilege some actors, some identities, some strategies, some spatial and temporal horizons, some actions over others; and the ways, if any, in which actors (individual and/or collective) take account of this differential privileging through “strategic-context” analysis when choosing a course of action. (Jessop, 2008: 236)}
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Within CPE/E, elements from scientific or critical realism, as presented by Bhaskar and Archer (Hay, 2002: 122; see also Danermark et al., 2002; Robertson, 2000: 9, Jessop, 2005), can be recognized. Critical realism claims that the world is structured in such a way that it exhibits a separation of appearance and reality. Arguing that social reality consists of structures and internal related objects containing causally operating properties, the critical realist approach goes beyond what is empirically observable through formulating questions about, and developing concepts of, the more fundamental, transfactual conditions for the events and phenomena under study (Danermark et al., 2002: 96). It is affirmed that “if we are to reveal the structured reality of the world we inhabit, we must cast our gaze beyond the superficial realm of appearances, deploying a theory as a sensitizing instrument to reveal the structured reality beneath the surface” (Hay, 2002: 122). It embarks from the idea that we cannot understand (political) behavior and power relations without understanding the ideas actors hold about their environment. Thus, it recognizes a complex and dialectical interaction between material and ideational factors (Hay, 2002a: 208). Critical realists argue that, in trying to understand reality, ontology must be distinguished from epistemology. Presenting critical realism as an alternative to both positivism and postmodernism, Fairclough (2005) affirms that “we must avoid the ‘epistemic fallacy’ of confusing the nature of reality with our
knowledge of reality” (2005: 922). In critical realist theory reference is made to a “stratified ontology,” which sees processes/events and structures as different strata of social reality with different properties (Fairclough, 2005: 922). In critical realism a distinction is drawn between the “real,” the “actual,” and the “empirical”: “the ‘real’ is the domain of structures with their associated ‘causal powers’; the ‘actual’ is the domain of events and processes; the ‘empirical’ is the part of the real and the actual that is experienced by social actors” (Fairclough, 2005: 922). However, the author continues: “[t]he ‘actual’ does not in any simple or straightforward way reflect the ‘real’: the extent to which and ways in which the particular causal powers are activated to affect actual events is contingent on the complex interaction of different structures and causal powers in the causing of events.” Causal powers thus are not exclusively the properties of structures: social agents also have causal powers which affect the actual. Henceforth critical realism aims to explain social processes and events in terms of the causal powers of both structures and human agency and their eventual effects (Fairclough, 2005: 923).

The theoretical approach discussed above influenced to a great extent the design of the research and the methodological choices made. These will be discussed in this section, grouping them in four topics: the focus on discursive manifestations; the view on the relationship between “micro” and “macro”; the relationship between engagement and commitment, and; the qualitative approach.

**Focus on Discursive Manifestations**

As explained in Chapter 2, investigation of discourse as mediating entity is necessary to account for the relationship between structures, and processes or events. Discourse was referred to as a social practice that, through defining the “thinkable” and the “unthinkable,” constitutes issues and subjects through “language.” It was argued that discourse is a form of social action and interaction, situated in social contexts in which the participants are not only speakers, writers, listeners, or readers, but also social actors, and members of certain groups and sectors of society (Fairclough, 1995, 1997, 2005; Van Dijk, 1997). Discourse norms, rules, conditions, and functions and their effects are socially shared. Discourses and the mental dimensions linked to it are embedded in social situations and social structures. And, vice versa, social representations, relations, and structures are often constituted, constructed, valued, normalized, evaluated, and legitimated through text and speech.

In understanding the nature, function, and effects of discourse in the formation of social practices related to ethnicity/race issues in education, this work draws on the approach of “critical discourse analysis” (CDA). The critical discourse analysis approach clarifies that, if one wants to know what ideology looks like, how it is disseminated through discourse, and how it can be changed and reproduced, we need to look at its “discursive manifestations,” that is, the ways in which they are expressed in language use, text, speech, and communication (Van Dijk, 1997). Hence, the fact that critical discourse analysis is not merely concerned with languages and orders of discourse, but also with texts as (elements of) processes, and with the relations of tension between the two (Fairclough, 2005: 922), distinguishes it from more descriptive approaches in discourse analysis. Instead of focusing upon language – or the use of language – in and for itself, critical discourse analysis concentrates on the analysis of linguistic and semiotic aspects of social processes, structures, and problems (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 271). The existence of different levels, strategies, and structures of discourse, all with distinct mental, interaction, and social functions, and the role these play in the constitution and expression of discourses is recognized.
Critical discourse analysis, focusing on the analysis of texts in their societal context, makes it possible to deconstruct discourses and unveil their articulations and underlying ideologies. In critical discourse analysis, it is claimed that naturalized implicit propositions of an ideological character are pervasive in discourse, contributing to the positioning of people as social subjects (Fairclough, 1995: 23). Hence, as this study aims to adopt a critical approach, it aims to “elucidate such naturalizations, and more generally to identify social determinations and effects of discourse which are characteristically opaque to participants” (Fairclough, 1995: 23).

One of the characteristics of critical discourse analysis is that it is interpretative and explanatory. As discourse is linked to ideologies and power relations, these need to be deconstructed and embedded in the related social conditions (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 279). Therefore a systematic methodology and a thorough investigation of the context are needed. In the case of this study, in order to unveil the different interpretations and translations of Law 10.639 as a policy instrument, and the processes of agenda setting and enactment related to it, the attempt was made to acquire knowledge concerning (dominant societal) argumentation structures related to ethnicity/race, racism, and inequality in Brazil. This was done based on the idea that this knowledge makes it possible to disentangle manifest and latent meanings and find out more about (political) rhetoric concerning the issue of ethnicity/race. Thereby it was recognized that only in this way the analysis of a discourse can lead to an explanatory contribution, instead of merely having an interpretative character.

Attempting to deconstruct discourses related to ethnicity/race and education in general, and Law 10.639 in particular, in the analysis of the texts (in a broad sense), this study focused on the unraveling of the different discourse strategies used to express certain ideas. Special attention was paid to the analysis of the ways in which discourses had an evaluative, affective, comparative, normative, or judgmental function. These functions were recognized in elements of discourse such as local meaning, style, and rhetoric.

First, local meaning was analyzed, relating it to the ways in which a certain subject is specified, implications are formulated, and strategic expressions such as negation or concession are used. Analysis of local meaning helped to unveil the underlying beliefs and attitudes regarding ethnicity/race issues in general, and Law 10.639 specifically. Thereby special focus went to the ways in which ethnicity/race issues were problematized. Coherence, implications, presumptions, and negation expressed in the structure of the sentences and choice of words were considered. Moreover, the following questions guided the analysis: What are the implications of or presumptions behind the statements? From what pre-established truths does the speaker seem to start? What implicit relations are intimated between statements? Does the speaker express a(n implicit) view on causal or explanatory relations? Do the statements have a judgmental connotation? What other causal relations between statements and facts are (implicitly) suggested? Moreover, adhering to the perspective of critical discourse analysis, it was also considered important to investigate implicit propositions, since ideologies are also often embedded in the “unsaid” (Fairclough, 1995: 24). Hence, the intention of this study was to also to develop a view on “what is not said, […] what is hidden, and […] of what it might be but is not” (Bonal, 2012: 6).

Second, when studying style and rhetoric, the focus is on answering the question regarding which implicit or explicit argumentation can be unveiled in the statements. Style and rhetoric refer to the different ways in which in a specific context meaning is given through the selection of special words or the use of certain pronouns, such as “us” and “them.” They can also allude to more distant ways of referring to other groups, such as “those people.” Use of this terminology is considered an
important strategy (unconsciously) used to create and strengthen polarization in society. Linked to this, attention is paid to negative representation of the other and positive representation of the self. Discourse structures that present “them” as bad, and “us” as good, could very well play a significant role in the expression and reproduction of polarized underlying attitudes and ideologies (Van Dijk, 1997). Attention is also paid to use of the expressions such as “You know what I mean,” or “normal,” as these are considered strategies speakers use that allow them to remain implicit on some issues. It is a strategy speakers use to demarcate what they consider “information” and what they do not. This links up to the interest regarding the “unsaid” already referred to above. Moreover, when considering style, the order of words, the use of active or passive sentences (or other structural ways to make the “agency” of certain actors more or less prominent), the use of contrast, metaphors, hyperbole, and euphemisms are also significant.

A Critical View of the Relationship Between “Micro” and “Macro”

This study adopts a critical view of the relationship between micro events (such as verbal events), and “macro” structures, considering the latter as both the condition for and the product of the former. Hence, in critical discourse analysis rigid barriers between the study of the “micro” and the “macro” are rejected (Fairclough, 1995: 28). Recognizing the idea that analysis of text should not be isolated from analysis of institutional and discursive practices within which texts are embedded, a framework was developed that integrated both “micro” and “macro.” Based on the three-dimensional framework of critical discourse analysis that includes both the analysis of text, discourse practice, and sociocultural practice, this study focuses on the investigation of processes of text production and distribution as well as of interpretation, translation, and recontextualization of these in different contexts. Considerations from the extended case method (Burawoy, 1998) also helped in establishing how – through reflexive analysis, and “extending from the field” – to extract “the general from the unique.” As formulated by Burawoy (1998: 5), the extended case method entails a process where “moving from the ‘micro’ to the ‘macro,’ it tries to connect the present to the past in anticipation of the future by building on preexisting theory.”

Engagement and Commitment

Discourse analysis as a socially committed scientific paradigm (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 279-280) is a form of social action because it intends to uncover opaqueness and power relations. Ideally, this uncovering will lead to the formulation of new guidelines for different patterns of behavior. In this study, I intended to uncover and unveil (at least some) rationales, motives, and frames existing behind the non-recognition and recognition of racial inequality in Brazilian society in general, and in education in particular. While starting from a clear commitment, in critical discourse analysis, interpretations and explanations are also never considered finished and authoritative: “[t]hey are dynamic and open, open to new contexts and new information” (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 279). Scholars working from a critical discourse analysis perspective do not consider themselves as producing dispassionate and objective social science. Instead, they position themselves as engaged and committed. While affirming the idea that a critical approach does not imply an exception to the normal objectivity of social sciences, in this research I do start from a position of solidarity with “minorities in power” and “subordinate social groups” (Santos, 2001b); in this case those actors in Brazilian society campaigning for a more just society, also in an ethnic/racial sense.

65 This is an element that fits nicely with the approach to the policy process adopted in this study (see Chapter 2).
Thereby I also identify with the statement made in relation to critical discourse analysis (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 279) that research, and the different moments that are part of it, such as interviewing and observing, is also a form of intervention in social practice and social relationships. The act of entering spaces – such as schools, social movement organizations, and institutions linked to the official political arena – that are not part of my own daily routine entails my “intervening” in these situations. This does not mean that the “situations” and reactions I might provoke reflect reality to any lesser degree. But it is important to recognize that I also am playing a role in this reality. Among many other things, the following factors played a role in collecting data: 1) my being a researcher and not an education professional or actor working in the state apparatus; 2) my not being Brazilian; 3) my being a woman; and 4) my being white. These aspects affected the ways in which others presented themselves to me and the extent to which they opened themselves up to me, when reflecting on reality and their own acting in it. In the words of Burawoy (1998: 22), several “layers of power” have a part to play in the contexts and situations I studied, and I as a researcher was also part of these.

Regarding the importance afforded to reflection on the own role as researcher, some elements of the “extended case method” (ECM) (Burawoy, 1998) are relevant to highlight here. The extended case method uses a reflexive model of science that takes as its premise the intersubjectivity of scientist and subject of study. In the extended case method, instead of suspending participation in the world studied, for instance through standardization of data collection and the “bracketing” of external conditions (Burawoy, 1998: 5), the researcher tries to thematize the own participation in the world studied. I adhere here to the words of Mathers and Novelli (2007: 230) that the extended case method, in the attempt to construct a bridge between academia and activism, is characterized by a critically engaged approach to researching resistance to neoliberal globalization (see also Santos, 1999a). The extended case method fits thereby in a “reflexive model of science” – a model that embraces not detachment but engagement as the road to knowledge, or, in the words of Mathers and Novelli (2007: 231), “a social science that is both intellectually critical and oriented to intervention in the public sphere.”

This study closely adheres to the idea expressed by Santos regarding the existence of a need to move from a focus on knowledge that serves regulation, to a focus on knowledge that serves emancipation (Santos, 1999a: 48). Santos calls for a “sociology of absences” that uncovers the hidden histories and struggles of the resisting “other” and a “sociology of emergences” that charts possible alternative tendencies and counter-hegemonic futures (Santos, 2001b: 191). In developing this approach, the first step is to start “listening to the south” (Santos in Mathers & Novelli, 2007: 234). Thereby I agree with Mathers and Novelli (2007: 234) that the South “is used metaphorically, regardless of geographical location, for the site inhabited by those suffering under global capitalism, and resisting it.” Boaventura de Sousa Santos (in Mathers & Novelli, 2007: 234) rightly highlights that more innovative ideas and practices often come from both outside the North and outside academia. Accordingly, in the search for developing “a dialogue with ‘active’ and ‘counter-hegemonic’ publics” (Burawoy, 1998, 2004: 1607), for this study the participation in the project “Law 10.639 and Teaching Geography” conducted by the research group Geography, Race Relations and Social Movements (Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas em Geografia, Relações Raciais e Movimentos Sociais, NEGRAM), linked to the department of teacher training from the Rio de Janeiro State University was considered as positively influencing and to a great extent nurturing the development of this study.

66 In fact, as one of the sites, Santos (2004a) refers to the World Social Forum.
**A Qualitative Approach**

These methodological considerations influenced choices made concerning methods. For this study, the conscious choice for a dominant qualitative approach was made. This was based on the idea that the unveiling of processes, strategies, ideas, and discourses is difficult, or even impossible, to realize through a mere quantitative approach. It is a fact that in quantitative attitude research questions are often programmed in such a way that details—essential for the understanding of processes, strategies, ideas, and discourses—are lost. Accordingly, a critical ethnographic approach was used in which the focus was on unraveling micro-processes while embedding these in the macro-structural environment of Brazil. Thereby I build on the idea expressed by Gillborn (1994: 162) regarding the key role of ethnography in documenting power and understanding processes of change and resistance.

Nonetheless, in the second part of this study some quantitative contextual data are presented as well. Given the fact that no systematic evaluation on implementation of Law 10.639 in schools by national or local authorities existed, a wide variety of data garnered from surveys and a more quantitative analysis of these provided me a first general overview with regard to “the state of art.” These quantitative data served to illustrate the context in which certain processes, strategies, ideas, and discourses in the specific case school I analyzed took place.

In this project different sampling strategies were adopted at different stages of the research project. In all these stages, instead of selecting elements based on a specific calculation of chances, the characteristics of the population were used as the basis of selection (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 78). As will be detailed below, in the initial stage of the project, while categories were still being identified and named, sampling was more open and unstructured. As theory developed during the project, categories were integrated along dimensional levels, and sampling became more purposive and discriminate (Straus & Corbin in Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 81). As a criterion for selection of participant institutions and actors, the principle of in-depth coverage (instead of breadth in terms of sample) was adhered to. The intention was to achieve symbolic representation and diversity, not necessarily to produce a sample sufficiently large to allow independent commentary, as would be the case in statistical research (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 102). Accordingly, the samples are relatively small. This approach had its effects on the generalizability of the findings. While the in-depth analysis of one case school helped in recognizing, uncovering, and unveiling processes, strategies, ideas, and discourses, no statements can be made regarding “the implementation of Law 10.639” in general.

### 3.2 Research Design

Focusing on the relationship between professional educators in the school as strategic actors and the strategic selective context of the governance of race issues in education, this research project was divided in two parts: one (A) that started from the analysis of the strategic selective context of politics of race and education, and another (B) that started from the analysis of the strategies of actors in the school regarding race issues in their daily educational practice.

In first instance, the politics of race and education were studied (part A). The intention was to understand who the main actors are on the different scales of governance (e.g., the global, the national, the state, the municipal) and within different arenas (e.g., the community and social movements) that have the dominant power in the governance of race issues in education. I was also interested to know what roles these different actors play in the constitution of this agenda. The
politics of race and education is thereby understood as the “structured context” (Hay, 2002) wherein professional educators in the school work.

In second instance, the day-to-day recontextualization of education politics on race was studied (part B). Here the intention was to gain an understanding of why actors in the school (in this case, members of the pedagogical/management team and teachers, being: educationists, coordinators, principal, and vice-principal) work with race issues in the way they do, and what the mechanisms are that regulate these practices. Thereby the strategies and practices of teachers and other actors in the school are understood as shaped in dialectical relation with the “structured context” (A).

In presenting A and B as two parts of the research, the objective was to analyze the relation between the politics of race and education as the structured context, and the pedagogical practices and strategies as strategic actions of teachers and the pedagogical/management team in the school. As the theoretical discussion on the strategic relational approach in Chapter 2 made clear, I consider it important not only to study A and B, but also propose to study the relationship between the two. Inspired by the work of Dale (1994), I consider it important to understand the dialectical relation between A and B, in order to not only gain insight into what happens and exists in school in relation to race issues, but to also try to explain this phenomenon in its broader context, while attempting “not to fall in the ‘trap’ of explaining education from within education” (Dale, 1994: 35). Now the discussion will turn to the methodological choices made in the two parts of the study.

3.2.1 Part A: The Structured Context

Location
For part A of the research, data were collected in both the city of Rio de Janeiro (capital of the like-named state) and Brasilia, the political capital of Brazil. Law 10.639, the object of research, is a law that was approved in and disseminated from the national official political arena. Therefore it was important to collect data on the process of agenda-setting aided by actors working in or previously involved in this arena. Secondary literature and the first exploratory interviews pointed, however, to the fact that the contents of the law were in the first instance developed within the civil society arena and circulated on state and municipal levels of governance. Accordingly, in this first part of the study the local level of governance and social movements also needed to be included. The decision then needed to be made on what local government needed to be included. Considering relevance of scope in a country of such monumental proportions as Brazil is not easy. Because of its enormous dimensions it is also a very diverse country in several aspects, such as with regard to its people and its geography. This diversity also exists in its politics and policymaking. Rio de Janeiro is one of the states with the highest percentage of blacks in the population. Moreover, it is also a center that historically played an important role strengthening the political debate and agenda-setting with regard to ethnicity/race and education (A11:22). These reasons, combined with practical considerations, led to the decision to collect data for the first part of the study (as well as for the second part, as will be discussed below) in this state.

Arenas and Actors
For the selection of specific actors in part A of the research I mainly used “theoretical” (or “purposive”) sampling. As Ritchie and Lewis (2003: 80) explain, theoretical sampling is a kind of sampling “in which the researcher samples incidents, people or units on the basis of their potential contribution to the development and testing of theoretical constructs.” Theoretical sampling is
characterized by being an iterative process in which “the researcher picks an initial sample, analyses the data, and then selects a further sample in order to refine his or her emerging categories and theories” (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 80). Accordingly, this sampling strategy is particularly appropriate for exploratory studies in unfamiliar areas where it may be difficult to identify in advance the groups and characteristics that need to be included in the sample (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 80).

In first instance, key arenas and actors were identified in secondary literature and policy documents. Afterwards, during the first interviews a snowball method was used to get to the participants who ultimately were interviewed. Interviews were held with different actors, either directly or indirectly involved in the constitution or monitoring of Law 10.639 and/or the theme of ethnic/racial issues and education. Participants were actors from the official political arena, from the civil society arena and from the pedagogical arena.

The interviews were held between October 2007 and February 2009. Fieldwork started in city of Rio de Janeiro, where the actors interviewed were mainly activists within, or someone linked to or solidary with, the Brazilian Black Movement; data were otherwise collected in local (Rio de Janeiro state and Niterói municipality) representations of education authorities. In that same period a one-week stay in Brasília offered the opportunity to interview actors (formerly) operating in the official political arena. These were activists within the Brazilian Black Movement, persons linked to or empathizing with the Movement, scholars, and persons working in authorities linked to the official political arena at the national level.

In total, sixteen actors working in the political arena at national and at local (state and municipal) levels were interviewed. In addition to interviews with these actors, information was collected in the form of documents and during several seminars on the theme. Fourteen actors from the civil society arena were interviewed. These were actors from the Brazilian Black Movement and entities such as teachers unions and NGOs, most of them linked to or empathizing with the Black Movement. Some of these actors also operated in the pedagogical arena, working as independent scholars, or within research institutes, universities, or teacher training colleges. Here too, besides interviews with these actors, information was collected in the form of documents and during seminars. In the pedagogical arena, apart from the fieldwork done in Niterói in part B of the research, I interviewed seventeen actors.

Methods
The focus in the semi-structured in-depth interviews was on understanding the politics of race and education and the arenas, actors, and agendas involved. The interviews, all conducted in Portuguese, consisted of three parts: one in which I focused on the history preceding the creation of Law 10.639, one in which I focused on the process after enactment of the law (implementation/agenda-setting), and one in which emphasis was on the personal and/or professional and/or institutional role and experiences in relation to ethnicity/race issues and education. With the exception of one interview, after asking for permission, all the interviews with both the official political arena and civil society arena actors were recorded on a digital recorder, and notes were taken during and worked out after the meeting. The sessions with the actors operating in the official political arena in all cases took place within the official political institution

67 Tables IIa, IIb and IIc in Appendix II list the institutes and organizations within the official political arena, civil society arena, and pedagogical arena where I interviewed actors during fieldwork.

68 In one case in an interview with a high-positioned actor in the State Secretary of Education in Rio de Janeiro, as a lot of resistance was felt when entering the room, the decision was taken not to record the interview.
the actor worked in, and lasted 1-1½ hours. In general, the conversations took place in a good atmosphere as most actors were willing to collaborate and open to sharing their ideas.

The interviews with the actors linked to the civil society arena and the pedagogical arena took place in a variety of locations proposed by the interviewees.69 Sessions lasted between 1½ and 2½ hours. Actors were all very collaborative, and open to sharing their opinions, ideas, and professional and personal experiences in the interviews.

3.2.2 Part B: Strategic Practice

In the second part of the study in which I investigated the “translations” of the agenda into problems and issues for schools, and schools’ responses to those problems and issues, I focused on the ways in which members of the pedagogical/management team (educationists, coordinators, principal, and vice-principal) and primary school teachers reflect on their own work and the work of others in the institution related to ethnicity/race issues.

Location

The decision to collect data for the first part of the study in the city of Rio de Janeiro led to the decision to also focus on schools within the state of Rio de Janeiro. In the explorative phase of the study, through first contacts made, schools in three different municipalities within the metropolitan region of Rio de Janeiro (São Gonçalo, Duque de Caxias and Rio de Janeiro, see Figure 3.1) were visited. Thereafter, for fieldwork based data collection, the decision was taken to focus on one municipality in the state of Rio de Janeiro, the municipality of Niterói. In the interviews held in part A of the study, several actors mentioned Niterói as being one of the two municipalities within the state that engaged the most with ethnicity/race issues in education70 (A1:34). Moreover, it was considered important to take a relatively small municipality as case, as this offered the possibility to include in the research schools from all the five education districts (see Figure 3.1).

The city of Niterói is one of the nineteen municipalities located in the metropolitan region of Rio de Janeiro state. It is located 14 km away from Rio de Janeiro City, to which it is linked by the Rio-Niterói bridge. The municipality is sub-divided into 12 administrative districts (see Figure 3.2). Occupying an area of 129,375 km, it belongs to the smaller municipalities in the region. At the same time it is the sixth most populous city in the state, with an estimated population of 487,562 inhabitants in 2010 (IBGE, 2010: 178).

Recent studies published by the Getúlio Vargas Foundation showed that Niterói is the richest municipality of the some 5,600 municipalities in Brazil. Of the population, 30.7 percent belongs to the highest socioeconomic class A71 and 42.9 percent belongs to category A/B (Neri, 2011: 51-57). Outcomes from the 2010 household census show, however, that this quality of life – like in many other regions and capitals in Brazil – is distributed very unequally. Outcomes of the same census indicate that in 2010 another 45 percent of the Niterói population above the age of ten, with some kind of income, lived on two minimum salaries or less, thus belonging to the lowest socioeconomic class E (Chistofori, 2011).

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69 In the majority of cases interviews were held at the official quarters of a social movement organization or at a university. Some, however, also took place in more informal settings, such as a cafeteria.

70 The other municipality was Nova Iguaçu.

71 For an explanation on the meaning of the classes A, B, C, D, and E, see Chapter 1.
In the fieldwork period, I visited schools in the five different education districts of the municipality which all had different economic characteristics. The neighborhood in which the case school was located is one of the most heavily populated neighborhoods of the municipality. Household census data confirm that in 2010 almost a quarter of the inhabitants earned less than one minimum salary. The data I collected on one of the case schools confirmed this.\footnote{These data will be further discussed in Chapter 6.}

**Cases and Actors**

In this part of the research, criterion-based sampling was used; as the range of types and characteristic of schools was wide, choices had to be made when defining the institutions to include in the study. Fitting into what was referred to above as theoretical sampling, schools and participants were chosen based on particular features or characteristics that enabled detailed exploration and understanding of the central theme (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 78). After collecting data on the first selection of schools that met certain prescribed criteria, I defined the case I finally focused on. First the process of selecting the twelve schools will be discussed, after which I will comment on the choice for the final case school.
The Selection of the Twelve Schools

Three decisions guided the selection of the case school. Firstly, I wanted to focus on public schools. Secondly, as I was investigating a specific municipality, I wanted to focus on municipality schools. Thirdly, I was interested in including schools from different areas (e.g., less urban and more urban, low and high socioeconomic profile).73

These criteria of interest I presented to the local municipal authority, whom I depended on for getting authorization to contact the schools. After explaining the considerations above and making clear that I was interested in getting a first sample that was as diverse as possible in order to afterwards choose one case school for more in-depth study, the department selected twelve schools in the five different education districts of the municipality (see Figure 3.2 below). This meant that, in the first instance, I collected data on schools in both urban settings and more rural settings, and, within these regions in neighborhoods with higher and lower socioeconomic status.

When I approached these schools and asked them for their collaboration, all of them welcomed me to collect data in their institution, except one school (School 1A) that expressed that there was no time for receiving me during the fieldwork period I indicated. Instead of that school I got the authorization to contact another school (School 1B). In the end I collected data on 2 schools from education district 1, on 3 schools from education district 2, on 2 schools from education district 3, on 1 school from education district 4, and on 4 schools from education district 5 (see Figure 3.2 below).

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73 I also reflected on taking the racial/color composition of the neighborhoods as a criterion. However, I did not manage to access this type of data (for example on municipal level, as collected through annual household surveys). Besides, in relation to the criterion of racial/color composition, the following observations have to be made: The fact that certain neighborhoods/schools are not identified as black does not mean that in these contexts there are not many Afro-Brazilian people. What it does at least mean is that few people identify themselves as such. This in itself could mean that these issues are not addressed, or are even considered taboo in these contexts. Selecting the contexts based on how many people identify themselves as black/Afro-Descendant would indeed result in a selection of contexts where the issue is a topic of interest or is addressed, at least in some way. In that sense it would be more interesting to refer to “ethnic/racial consciousness” in a certain neighborhood or school, instead of ethnic/racial composition. For insight into consciousness, however, in-depth qualitative research conducted earlier would also be needed. Moreover, it is also true that considering oneself black does not automatically result in a valorization or application of Law 10.639. Early exploratory fieldwork showed that not all individuals who identify themselves as black also identify the importance of the law. Consequently not all of them work with it. My main interest also was not in the relationship between black consciousness and application of Law 10.639. Although taken into account in the analysis of data in a further stage of the research, it was decided that racial composition nor consciousness would be selection criterion for the neighborhoods and schools.
Data Collection on the Twelve Schools

In the first stage of fieldwork in Niterói I visited these schools one or two times. During the visits to the twelve schools I conducted semi-structured interviews with as many actors as possible from the school management team (principal and vice-principal) and the pedagogical team (educationists and coordinators). Also here the interviews were held in Portuguese. Those members of the pedagogical and management team whom I could not meet for an interview within the time span of this part of my fieldwork I left a questionnaire addressing the same issues as the interview.

The number of participants in the various schools varies (see Table IIId in Appendix II for an overview). I tried to at least interview or give a survey to two actors within each school (of whom at least one member of the management, and – if such a person was not available – a member of the coordination team). This proved possible in ten of the twelve schools. This part

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74 My original objective was to interview all members of each school’s management and pedagogical coordination team; the management in most schools was two persons but in smaller schools sometimes a single principal, while the latter’s numbers varied, depending on the size of the school. However, when I entered the field, I found that this was not
of the fieldwork took place over five months, in two periods: June-July 2009 and August-December 2009.

The data collected in this group of schools were used to select one school for a more in-depth study. The focus on one case made it possible to do justice to the exploratory character of this part of the study, investigating more profoundly through what processes the content of Law 10.639 and the Curriculum Directives are translated into problems and issues in a school, and what the responses of the school to these problems and issues are. The answers of individual actors were triangulated with other data sources such as statements of other team members, document analysis, and observations in the school context.

Selection of the Case School

The data collected on the 12 schools were used to select the case school. Various aspects were considered such as size of the school, levels and types of education offered – preferably in addition to the regular first and second cycle of primary education also an evening education program for youth and adults (Educação de Jovens e Adultos, EJA) – as well as considering the receipt and reported implementation of Law 10.639. Besides this, I was interested in investigating one of the larger municipal schools (with 700 pupils or more). After selecting the larger schools, six schools were left to make a selection from. Taking practical matters such as access into consideration as well, I opted for conducting the case study in an urban school. Four schools were then left over. Three of the remaining schools also offered an evening education program for youth and adults. In the final choice between these three schools I looked at the profile and contexts of the schools, and how the actors in the school received the Law 10.639 and reported on implementation in their institution. However, like in the local Niterói authority, no systematic evaluation on implementation of Law 10.639 in schools existed; the data collected on the twelve schools in the first stage of fieldwork gave me a first impression in this regard. The interviews and surveys combined with my realistic when taking into account the planning of my fieldwork as in the majority of schools it was difficult to get time for an interview or make actors fill in a questionnaire. The reason given most often was lack of time.

75 In many schools I managed to include more actors. There were two schools in which I did not manage to include more than one participant in the research. At one of them, the vice-principal said during the first interview that no appointment could be made to receive me for a second interview with another team member, due to it not fitting in the schedule. And in the other school, although the meeting had been scheduled earlier, no second member of the team was available for an interview. Surveys were left behind at the school, but were never completed and returned. Due to time restrictions for the fieldwork and distant location of the school, I did not manage to return in the fieldwork period.

76 More extensive data were collected on two schools. However, since a comparison of the cases was not the intention of this thesis, here only data collected on one of the schools will be presented and analyzed in depth. The analysis of data collected on the other school will be presented in a forthcoming publication.

77 EJA is the evening education program for youth and adults above the age of 15 who have not completed primary education.

78 In Rio de Janeiro, there is a social movement made up of actors from/linked to the Black Movement (including a very prominent actor called IARA, the Institute of Racial and Environmental Advocacy, coordinated by Humberto Adami) which since 2005 has been conducting an “evaluation” on this issue. Since the state was not doing anything to improve/control the implementation since Law 10.639 had been passed in 2003, these actors started proceedings against all 5,463 municipalities in the country. This movement gathered a lot of interesting material: data on the proceedings brought by the Public Prosecutor and schools. (see discussion in Chapter 5).

Considering the material collected on this issue by these other actors, I believe (as do these actors) that the municipalities and state representatives, as well as actors from schools, often give “politically correct” answers: they say that they do work with the law, but the question is whether this is really the case, and also if they do so, in what way. (Does a celebration of National Black Consciousness Day on the 20th of November, or inviting a capoeira group for a performance once a year mean that they “obey” the law?)

79 Besides the answers to the direct question whether the school works with the contents proposed by Law 10.639, I took into account the more detailed answers concerning other issues touched on, such as: 1) expressed knowledge on the contents of the law; 2) opinions in relation to the importance of the law; 3) reference to the work (its form,
own observations, gave me an impression with regard to the criteria whether ethnicity/race issues are perceived to be present in the school, whether the school works with the issue, and whether the issue is included in a school-wide project. These impressions showed me that in School 10 a larger percentage of actors considered the law important, and tried to develop work related to it compared to other schools. Moreover, School 10 was also the institution where (compared to the other two schools fitting the categories) more members of the school management and the pedagogical team recognized the importance of working with the issues covered by Law 10.639, with many actors in the institution confirming that the school worked with the issue. I also became interested in focusing on School 10 as it was the school attracting pupils belonging to the lowest socioeconomic sections of society. Hence, the societal problem of exclusion was most directly visible inside and around this school.

Data Collection on the Case School
In School 10, a qualitative analysis of contextual issues and factors, and of the strategies and practices of actors from the pedagogical and management team (educationists, coordinators, principal, and vice-principal) in working with ethnicity/race issues was realized. Moreover data were collected from teachers in order to gain insight in their strategies and practices. The process of data collection had an ethnographic character in School 10. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and surveys (both in Portuguese) with members of the pedagogical/management team, teachers and pupils. Moreover, documents were collected and analyzed (such as the Political Pedagogic Project and other project descriptions), observations were made, a discussion about the collected data was organized and, together with students from the research group Geography, Race Relations and Social Movements, referred to above, a training session was organized at the school where a specific way of working with ethnicity/race issues was presented. After each of these occasions, focus group discussions took place in which members of the pedagogical/management team and teachers participated. This part of the fieldwork took place in different blocs of time in the period between June 2009 and November 2010 (Table IIe in Appendix II offers an overview of the types and numbers of participants and data collected at School 10).

The Pedagogical/Management Team Members
As in all the initial twelve schools, the aim was to interview as many actors as possible from the pedagogical/management team in School 10. My more frequent presence and interaction with actors at the school made it much easier to get actors within the school to participate in the research. In any case, here too I left behind a questionnaire for those members of the pedagogical and management team whom I could not meet for an interview within the time span reserved for this part of my fieldwork. In the case of School 10 (with a participation of 8 out of 9), the objective of including all the professionals was nearly achieved.

The focus in the interviews with and questionnaires completed by the pedagogical and management team members was on gaining insight into through what processes the content of Law 10.639 and the Curriculum Directives are translated into problems and issues in the schools, and into the responses of the professional actors within the institution to these problems and issues. In frequency, scope, and duration) realized in the school in relation to the law; 4) material used in this work; 5) whether contents of the law were included in the Political Pedagogical Project of the school; 6) difficulties mentioned in relation to application of the law; 7) teacher training provided in relation to contents of the law; and 8) whether answers of different professionals in relation to the aforementioned points are similar.

80 The focus of the workshop was the use of cinema in working with ethnicity/race in the classroom.
the interviews with the pedagogical and management team members, special emphasis was on the views these members had on the (coordinating) role of the institution in this response and the relationship between the institution and actors from outside the school. The interviews (and questionnaires) also provided background information on the team members, including on educational level, training, years of experience in education, and ethnic/racial identity. 81 An interview guide was used in a flexible way, meaning that the order of issues was not fixed, and that in some interviews some of the issues were discussed more in depth than in others. These interviews were conducted in the school’s administration or principal’s office, in empty classrooms, and in the school cafeteria.

**Teaching Staff**

Concerning participation of teaching staff in school 10 no selection of participants was made. Surveys were distributed to teachers present during three team meetings. One meeting was held in the morning with the teachers working with the pupils from the second cycle of education (ideally teaching pupils aged 11-14 years). Another meeting was held in the afternoon with teachers working with the pupils from the first cycle of education (ideally teaching pupils aged 6-10 years). And another meeting was held in the evening with the teachers working with youth and adults above 15 years of age in the youth and adult education program (EJA). Thirty-six out of sixty-one teachers participated. A majority of the remaining teachers was not present at the planning session in which the survey was distributed (this mostly due to double shifts at different schools, but also due to leave, sick leave, etc.). A few teachers handed in a blank survey without comment or openly stated not having time to fill in the survey. In a small number of other cases the professionals promised me they would fill in the survey some other time and hand it in to me later, but this was only actually done in a very few cases.

The focus in the questionnaires for the teachers was also on gaining insight into through which processes the content of Law 10.639 and the Curriculum Directives are translated into problems and issues in the schools, and what the responses of the professional actors within the institution to these problems and issues are. For the teachers however, special emphasis was on their own practices as teachers (and less on the processes and practices within the whole institution). The questionnaires also provided background information on the team members, including on educational level, training, years of experience in education, and ethnic/racial identity. 82 The data collection with the teachers took place in the school library, the place where all team meetings were held.

**Pupils**

The pupils also filled in a short questionnaire that provided background information on their household socioeconomic situation, the educational level of their parents/caretakers, and the ways in which they described their ethnic/racial identity. This part of the research, although time-consuming and only providing me with background data, was certainly necessary, as I found out that the school did not keep any records regarding the profile of its pupils. Besides being important data for my research, this was one outcome of the research that I could immediately fruitfully share

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81 These profiles will be discussed in Chapter 6.
82 The teacher profiles will also be discussed in Chapter 6.
83 To collect data on the pupils, accompanied by a student assistant, I visited all the grades of the primary and secondary cycle and the evening EJA program.
with the school. After planning this part of the research with the school coordinators, they advised me, since the pupils in the first two grades would have difficulties with reading and writing, to let their parents fill in a short survey. In the end, 618 out of 766 pupils and 83 parents filled in the questionnaire. The number of missing pupils can be explained by their absence when the survey was taken, by the school enrolment records not being up to date, and non-response of many parents of first and second-grade pupils.

In addition to the data collected from these specific members of the school community, I enjoyed all the moments I was present in the institution and could have informal talks, in places like the hallways, teachers’ room, and cafeteria. I would take notes at times like these in my fieldwork journal. This journal was also used for making notes on observations. During my observations I was specifically focused on structural and organizational features in the school (such as, what does the physical environment look like and how is it used), actors in the school (how do they behave, interact, dress, and appear), the daily processes of activities (what are, for instance, the routines and rules), special events in the school (for example special celebrations or projects) and dialogues. In my reflection on these observations I also asked myself the question what I had not seen (for example: which interactions did not occur) and what was my “place” in the situation (how did people react to my presence).

Before analyzing the data, all interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed. The transcriptions and survey outcomes were then coded and grouped, making use of tools found in Excel and Atlas TI. In order to guarantee anonymity, instead of using names, a letter code or a combination of letter and number was assigned to each actor (see Box 3.1 for the abbreviations used for the different types of participants and a detailed explanation of how throughout the text reference is made to data). Before citing interview quotes in this thesis, I translated these from Portuguese to English. The same counts for cited literature and legal documents.

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84 During two-weekly planning meetings, I presented the first data collected in the school, including the profile of the pupils. On this occasion the pedagogical and school management team members shared their ideas on incorporating these new insights regarding the school population when rewriting the school’s Political Pedagogic Project.

85 A total of 575 pupils in the regular series and 43 students from the EJA course filled in the questionnaire.
3.3 Limitations and Ethical Considerations

The methodological choices described in this chapter have several advantages pertaining to critical insight into processes and relations. However, limitations also exist. In this study the decision was taken to study several arenas and actors at various scales of governance. It became a study with a broad character with regard to arenas, but with a narrower focus where the different actors and issues involved in the distinct arenas are concerned. Time restrictions made it impossible to include data from other schools in the analysis. The voices of other relevant actors in and around the school, such as pupils and their communities (including parents), were also not included in the analysis. Moreover, in the civil society arena and official political arena, due to time restrictions and the fact that the snowball method was used to gain access to actors, certain actors are more strongly represented than others. Likewise, comparing experiences in institutionalization and implementation of the law in different municipalities or states might bring up different issues. Moreover, although I did try to keep my work up to date, including reflection on more recent
developments in Brazil, this research necessarily ends at a certain point in time, whereas developments of course continue.

In addition to the limitations I consciously decided on when designing the research, several issues and factors played a part which proved more difficult to influence. Sometimes these influenced the course of the study in a negative way, while others may very well have influenced the study in a positive way. As Burawoy (1998: 4) puts it so well: “As social scientists we are thrown off balance by our presence in the world we study, by absorption in the society we observe, by dwelling alongside those we make ‘other’.” Besides recognizing the power imbalances that often play a role in a researcher-participant relationship, I reflected on the question of what the effect could be of a white, blond, highly educated woman studying ethnicity/race issues in Brazilian education. As discussed in the Chapter 1, identity, social positions and conflict, and ethnicity/race are complicated and sensitive issues. Living in Brazil, over the course of eight years I progressively became part of the social processes and structures in the country. Accordingly, I was also part of the social problem I was studying. The accounts of lived realities of racial discrimination shared by some participants contrasted with the ways I often felt I was perceived and treated in Brazil (most of the time with lots of gentileza – kindness – and attention). Where one of the participants described how she felt a shop attendant simply pretended not to see her and helped another customer (see Chapter 6), I could imagine myself in the position of that other customer. In my daily life I also wrestled with finding a position within the hierarchical and exclusionary structure of Brazilian society – although most of the time doing so from what could be considered a privileged position. I also constantly tried to investigate the room for maneuver I had as a person and professional to change these structures (at least a bit). In this process I also did not always find direct answers.

During the research, I experienced that people opened up easily to me, unabashedly giving their (sometimes extreme) opinions on ethnicity/race issues in education. In some situations I experienced how actors were also reacting to (aspects of) my identity. My whiteness in some moments seemed to make me a “natural partner” in understanding resistance to race-based education policies. At other times the knowledge that I was from abroad (or at least seemed to be) made actors expound their negative views and opinions on the exclusionary structures and social processes in Brazil even more strongly. I also perceived that the fact that I was from abroad and white, yet interested in studying the issue of ethnic/racial inequality, made other actors involved in combating ethnic/racial inequality and racism share their experiences very openly. Some of these actors explicitly affirmed the value of my researching this issue, being white and foreign, thus confirming that a (black) Brazilian will never hear many of the things that I heard so openly expressed in an interview. However, especially in the school, I also experienced and perceived some resistance to participation in the research. In these resistant attitudes, besides possible resistance to discussing ethnicity/race issues in general, and/or general dissatisfaction regarding working conditions and everything happening in the school context, the fact that I (with my particular – perceived – identity) was conducting the research might have played a role as well. Statements (such as “Who are you, an outsider, to come and investigate us?”) were never explicitly made in this regard. But it was an issue that on a few occasions sprang to mind during fieldwork in the school. With a modest, open, and friendly attitude, and through my informal presence in the school, I tried to create trust and space for breaking this perceived distance between me and some of the participants. I did this also through expressing interest in knowledge-sharing and certain ways of working (for example working with other members – all male and some black – of the UERJ research group Geography, race relations and social movements). Moreover, in the school I also considered it important to
“give back” the data I collected in the institution and to present my analysis of these – in that way hopefully helping with the process of knowledge construction in the school. Accordingly, many of these perceived “resistances” were unraveled on other occasions (e.g., during focus group discussions). However with a few of these – perceived as “resistant” – actors in the school I did not manage to engage further, not having enough time to “show my face” and further explain my interests and motives. This brings up the limitation that at some moments it seemed easier to include “non-resistant” actors in the research. Besides in the school this was also the case in the official political arena. Investigating the “unsaid” and the “invisible” has not been easy. Accordingly, and adhering to the words of Fairclough (2005: 923), I do not pretend to be exhaustive on the social reality I research. The interpretations and explanations I present in this thesis are not considered to be the final word on the subject and authoritative. Instead they are dynamic and open to new contexts and new information.

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86 Besides presenting the data collected at School 10, together with the research group Geography, race relations and social movements from the Rio de Janeiro State University (UERJ) mentioned earlier, a workshop was organized in the school.