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Discussion 1K

Prompt B

Hill claims that Mock Spanish takes on covertly racist undertones through the use of “indirect indexicality”. In this context, indirect indexicality refers to how Mock Spanish generates negative conceptions of Spanish-speaking populations, yet this association is ignored by speakers. Despite these implicit associations, Hill still claims that the true intent of phrases in Mock Spanish is only visible to those that have already been exposed to the negative imagery it is built upon.

The first example that Hill references is the use of the phrase “Hasta la vista, baby” in *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*. In the context of the movie, the phrase is meant to humanize the main character. Hill states that this phrase is only effective if the audience is able to characterize traditional Spanish speakers as “treacherous”, making room for a humorous juxtaposition. In the same line of thought, Hill attributes the humorous nature of the use of the word “Mañana” to the interlocutor’s ability to associate Spanish speakers as “lazy and procrastinating”. Hill’s final example revolves around the common appearance of Mock Spanish on greeting cards, accompanied by exaggerated, racist depictions of “Mexicans” (Hill, 483).

Each of Hill’s examples embodies a similar idea. Despite the seemingly innocuous nature that Mock Spanish displays on the surface, the indexicality of the phrases points toward racialization. Each of these Mock Spanish phrases acts as an index for some hidden, racist stereotype towards Spanish speakers. Unlike more classic examples of indexicality, like smoke

to a fire, these indexes may not be obvious on the surface. However, Hill claims that an understanding of the phrases' relationship with these stereotypes is still pivotal to true understanding of the phrases themselves. Despite this, the vast majority of the white population denies the racist nature of Mock Spanish. As a result, Hill classifies them under Ochs' term of indirect indexicality (Hill, 483).

Whether consciously or subconsciously, people don't typically take notice of the racialization of these indexes. In fact, Hill argues that the racist nature of Mock Spanish has become so hidden, that the norm has become to treat it as benign. This manifests itself in common discourse, as the phrase "I'm not racist, but..." is seemingly incompatible with Mock Spanish (Hill, 484). Perhaps more telling is how acceptable it has become to engage in Mock Spanish on a formal level. Hill's example of the glorification of a UN ambassador's use of the word "cajones" shows that, even at the most restricted level of code structuring, Mock Spanish is considered appropriate to the common population. Hill also points out that, in some ways, Mock Spanish is protected by the majority. Its usage is so commonplace that any complaints against it tend to result in the accuser being berated, rather than the offender. Hill calls this the construction of "White public space", an environment where the linguistic errors of Whites are normalized while those of Spanish-speaking populations is highly scrutinized (Hill, 484). All together, this tells us that Mock Spanish is simply not seen as direct hate speech, but instead has *covert* racist implications.