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Racialized Trajectories to Catalan Higher Education: Language, Anti-Racism and the 'Politics of Listening'

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Silence is a key part of perpetuating racism in Europe (Lentin 2008; De Genova 2016) often by maintaining 'epistemologies of ignorance' (Mills 2007). Reflecting on their report on Catalonia (SOS Racisme 2021), SOS Racisme stated 'there is a profound, historical and structural racism within our society and our institutions . . . there is silence and huge ignorance in connection with the seriousness of racism in our society'[1] (in Montanyà 2021). We contribute to this Special Issue by breaking some of these silences and building on scholarship around language and racism (Rosa and Flores 2015, 2017; Stoever, 2016) relating to 'regimes of perception' (Lo 2021). In line with the issue's themes of collaboration and social justice, listening becomes a political act of solidarity (Bassel 2018).

This article is based on an anti-racism project around racialized Catalans (RCs) at a Catalan university. This project initially started out as a set of interviews to listen to RCs and their trajectories to university. Examples of language-related racism frequently emerged. Subsequently, a more explicit collaboration emerged through an anti-racist, multicultural group named 'Junts' (a pseudonym)[2] made up of RCs. Our initial act of listening represents a form of building solidarities beyond institutional student–teacher dichotomies (Bassel 2018). We then worked on activities with Junts ranging from attending planning meetings for anti-racism activities to jointly conducting

anti-Islamophobia workshops for local school teachers with the aim of encouraging others to listen. The purpose of this article is to focus on two forms of listening through the following research questions: (i) how are RCs listened to within Catalan society? and (ii) how do members of Junts make others listen? Our article demonstrates how Catalan can be co-naturalized with whiteness to discriminate against RCs. We also outline the challenges for Junts to be heard in Catalan Higher Education (HE) and society more generally. For applied linguists, this is of relevance particularly in relation to issues of social justice such as racism. Silencing or ignoring such issues ultimately does little to challenge complicity in racial discrimination and the act of listening with the intention to act can provide a step towards challenging racism.

BACKGROUND

The politics of listening

The author Arundhati Roy (2004) famously said, 'there is really no such thing as the voiceless. There are only the deliberately silenced, or the preferably unheard.' Therefore, we have focused on listening to voices that are often silenced or unheard, in this case, RCs and Junts. Bassel (2018: 6) argues 'The politics of listening challenges norms of intelligibility, with the specific purpose of transforming audibility and breaking down binaries between "Us", the audible, and "Them", the silent or stigmatised Others.' Bassel (2018) proposes three key factors in the 'politics of listening': interdependence, recognition, and micro-politics. Interdependence refers to the willingness to take each other seriously as speakers and listeners. Recognition links to the breaking down of 'us and them' dichotomies to form a 'common us'. It is also necessary to engage with others to promote critical listening. This may not always be successful but it means listening with the intent to engender change.

In relation to racism and language, Rosa and Flores' (2015, 2017) term 'the white listening subject' is apt in that it can be interactional, institutional, and ideological (Rosa and Flores 2015, 2017). Of specific interest is the 'Catalan gaze' (Corona and Block 2020) in which the use of Spanish rather than Catalan can be used to differentiate RCs as perceived 'outsiders' or 'foreigners'. This contributes to the co-naturalization of whiteness and Catalan. Thus, relations and interactions become conditioned by 'regimes of audibility' in relation to 'regimes of visibility' (Fortier 2018) to shape perceptions of racialized individuals and groups .[3]

THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE IN CATALONIA

The language revitalization of Catalan remains a success story (Ager 2001; Woolard 2016). Catalonia is a bilingual territory in Spain where the minority language (Catalan) has a long history of repression and struggle in the face of the majority language of the state (Spanish). Since the end of the Franco

dictatorship in 1975 and the gain of regional autonomy, language-in-education policies in Catalonia have created a schooling system of immersion in Catalan to reverse the language shift into Spanish. According to this linguistic model, which has promoted bilingualism in Spanish and Catalan since the 1980s, Catalan is the language of instruction that gives access to the rest of the contents of the curriculum (Government of Catalonia 1983). The discourse of Catalan institutions presents Catalan as the axis for social cohesion, common to all, which guarantees equal opportunities for access to quality education, respecting cultural diversity, and avoids the risk of social exclusion (Pujolar 2010).

Whereas in 2000, the population classified as foreign was 181,590, the foreign population in 2020 (the last data available) was 1,260,619, which represents 16.2 % of the total population in Catalonia today (Idescat 2020a).[4] The area[5] for this study has one of the highest immigration rates in Catalonia and Catalan is employed for daily communication at almost 60 per cent (Idescat 2019), more than double the figure in Barcelona and almost double the average in Catalonia (36.1 %).

In the education sector, 'foreign'[6] students in primary and secondary education and vocational schools in Spain represent 9.3 % of the total (MEFP 2020). The percentage in Catalonia is the second highest in Spain (13.9 %). Statistically, students with a migrant background have a low school performance particularly in households where Catalan is not spoken (CTESC 2011). However, race is rarely, if ever mentioned, at a state level so it is almost impossible to highlight racial inequalities through state-level data.

RACISM AND 'RACELESSNESS'

Given how racism is often evaded through 'racelessness' (Beaman 2019), the work of groups like Junts becomes especially important. The lack of statistics on racial outcomes in Spain and Catalonia symbolizes an implicit 'colourblindness' present too in other European countries (see Beaman 2019). The belief that Europe is 'colourblind' plays a key role in disguising 'racelessness' as supposed racial neutrality (Goldberg 2006). A lack of official acknowledgment of racism results in a lack of anti-racist responses (see Beaman 2019; Beaman and Petts 2020).

In 2021, SOS Racisme in Catalonia published its annual report (SOS Racisme 2021) outlining examples of racism ranging from discrimination in housing to racial profiling by the police to access to the job market. They also highlighted the role of structural racism across Catalan society. Historically, cities such as Barcelona have benefitted from colonialism. Zeuske (2017) provides a detailed account of Catalan slave traders in Cuba which began a more expanded role in slave trade and exploitation that spread from Cuba to the Philippines. Oliva Meglar (1988) demonstrates how the wealth accrued would finance the base for economic development during the 18th and 19th centuries. There also still remain monuments in Catalonia dedicated to slave owners

(see Azarmandi 2020) and there are tours available to see key sites relating to the trafficking of slaves in Barcelona (Cia 2016). In 2019, the Catalan government apologized to the Indigenous people of Mexico for atrocities and crimes during the colonial past (ACN 2019).[7] We conclude by underlining: first, Catalonia, perhaps to a lesser extent than Spain, has on some level benefitted from colonialism. Secondly, colonialism has contributed to hierarchies of race involving whiteness that endure to this day. As Hesse notes such histories possess a 'defining logic of race in the process of *colonially* constituting itself and its designations of *non-Europeaness*, materially, discursively and extra-corporeally' (Hesse 2007: 646 - original emphasis). In this respect, it is more useful to frame racism through enduring colonial legacies which shape Europe (Lentin 2008, 2020).

Catalonia suffered greatly at the hands of Spain, recently (even though not exclusively) during the Franco dictatorship (1936–75). The actions taken against Catalan culture and language led to the loss of many historical references (Lladonosa Latorre 2013). Expressions of Catalan identity during the Franco period were prosecuted and repressed and a revived identity based on Spanish nationalism was imposed and Spanish was deemed to be the unifying, sole language. It is possible to understand the historical repression of Catalan and Catalonia while simultaneously remaining attentive to the racial formation of whiteness.

THE RESEARCH PROJECT AND METHODOLOGY

There were two phases to this research project. The initial project investigated the experiences of RCs in HE. The participants were students who had a migrant background. In most cases, this means that they were born outside of Spain and came to Catalonia as economic migrants at an early age. Over time our relationship with some of the participants grew, and in the second phase of the project, we joined Junts and collaborated with them in its formation in 2016. We spent over two years with Junts.

The data during the first phase were collected in the academic year 2015–16 and include 9 semi-structured interviews with 10 students lasting from 45 minutes to 165 minutes and one focus group discussion session of 90 minutes with 7 of the students who had been previously interviewed. The interviews adopted an exploratory approach and they all started in the following way: 'Tell me in a chronological order, if you wish, your life trajectory'. The language employed in the interviews was Catalan, as this is the unmarked language choice in the context of research and at the university where the students and the researchers met.[8] The analysis adopts a narrative approach with a focus on the content and the social and interactional work that is made by those telling a story (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2013; De Fina 2019) and the positionings emerging in narrative interaction (Depperman 2013). In line with Baynham (2011), simultaneously to the explanation of a story, storytellers position themselves towards the objects emerging in those stories

and evaluate them. The project followed the European Charter of Researchers ethical guidelines for educational research.[9]

Initially, interviews were coded for key themes. The corpus of interviews generated a category of 'obstacles' in relation to the trajectories to HE. From here, discrimination was a code under which racism became a sub-code (Saldaña 2020). Within a second cycle of coding, racism (e.g. racial slurs) became a category in which language-based racism emerged as a sub-code.

CONTEXT AND HUMANIZING THE STUDY

In order to provide transparency about our relationship with the participants and Junts, we seek to humanize our research (Paris and Winn 2014). We both had very different roles in interacting. Kamran Khan is a Muslim who migrated from the UK while Lídia Gallego Balsà is a white, Catalan academic who comes from a family of internal Spanish economic migrants. For Kamran in particular, Junts were more brothers and sisters within a shared faith which transcended hierarchies constructed within professional settings. Junts also assisted with issues such as finding the local masjid. Kamran is a British-Pakistani who spoke little Catalan at the time so shared faith was *the* key factor in building their relationship. Lídia went to the same school as some of the members of Junts in areas where migrants have historically settled. In the context of Catalonia, the language choices made by both researchers and Junts are significant (Gallego-Balsà 2020). Kamran did not speak Catalan so he often spoke in Spanish while Junts would use Catalan with him; thus, acknowledging the othering practice of using Spanish in Catalonia in this context. Lídia and Junts spoke in Catalan given their shared upbringing in Catalonia.

ANALYSIS

Reproducing the racial hierarchy through the white listening subject

This section contains data from interviews with the students about their experiences in Catalonia prior to university. The extracts included in the analysis are examples of their experiences of racial discrimination. Quite often racism in this respect was articulated through issues around Catalan as a marker of identity. Due to space constraints we present experiences of three people who best represent the recurring theme of 'raciolinguistic profiling' (Rosa and Flores 2017). Laila, Javier, and Omar (pseudonyms) were undergraduate students in a degree in social sciences at the time of the interviews. The examples of Laila and Javier demonstrate common, everyday, and institutional experiences. Omar was a founding member of Junts and is a link between the two phases of the work we did together. The extracts below feature short stories of raciolinguistic discrimination[10] in which students are positioned as outsiders and denied Catalan by a white listening subject (Rosa and Flores 2015, 2017).

The white listening subject in everyday life

Laila's experiences are both raced and gendered due to the connotations of being a Muslim who wears a hijab. Laila's family is from Morocco and spent almost her entire life in Catalonia. Before entering university, she completed vocational education.

> Laila: I have worn the headscarf since the first year of secondary education ... they create the image that I am from outside, that I can't speak, that I am uncultured etcetera, and later I break this image because I speak Catalan. I've always said that. I always break the image because I know the language. I find people who say "we can't mix with her because she can't speak." Then, when they hear me talking I answer in Catalan and they take back everything they thought before.

Not being able to speak to Laila, as someone who wears a hijab and what it semiotically represents reflects 'a sense of inaccessibility' (Puar 2007). This relates to how she is perceived as a non-Catalan speaker. Laila is aware of the tropes around Muslim women and challenges them through Catalan, as demonstrated in the following extract.

> Laila: I can explain a funny anecdote in which, based on my appearance they thought I do not speak Catalan. Well, I was once at the post office and I was talking to someone in the queue and when I left, I was almost the last one and outside someone was saying "*you know what? the one with the headscarf if she had taken a bit longer I swear that bla bla bla*"[11] [laughs] she thought I didn't understand Catalan because I was wearing a headscarf [laughs loud] and I finished listening to her and [laughs] then I told her "*well, have a nice evening*" [everyone laughs]. She was stunned she was stunned she blushed really. And I say just because people see me like this they think I do not speak Catalan and they can say whatever they want but anyway, it doesn't matter because they'll never see us.

Laila feels that she is not permitted to hold the position of being both Muslim and a Catalan speaker. This would further underline the construction of whiteness in relation to Catalan and who *is* perceived to speak Catalan. The others create a 'sonic racial line' (Stoever 2016) through the perception of Laila which she then re-draws by reinforcing her knowledge of Catalan. Here Rosa (2019) provides the compelling argument that 'languages are perceived as racially embodied and race is perceived as linguistically intelligible, which results in the overdetermination of racial embodiment and communicative practice—hence the notion of *looking like a language* and *sounding like a race*' (2). It is worth pointing out that although Islam is often positioned as not being a race, it is racialized for which all manner of perceptions are amalgamated into 'the figure of the Muslim' particularly in relation to hijab-wearing

Muslim women (Garner and Selod 2015). This means Islam becomes a 'de facto' race (Selod 2018) in which racial prejudices are circulated under the guise of religion.

Institutionalized white listening subject in education

Whereas in the previous extract about Laila, her experience occurred in everyday settings with strangers, Javier shared his experience in the institutionalized setting of the school with his teacher. Javier is from Ecuador and arrived in Catalonia when he was six. Javier speaks Spanish and comes from a Quechua-speaking family. He was educated in Catalan. Below, Javier explains his experience with the Catalan language teacher in high school. In a project, Javier had to co-write a text with a partner and the teacher decided to give Javier a grade lower than his partner.The teacher felt Javier had done less work. After that experience, Javier decided to write assignments for the Catalan teacher alone.

> Javier: I really didn't like my teacher of Catalan I mean I didn't like her at all. We wrote a project in pairs and presumably both of us should have obtained the same grade but she gave my partner a B and she gave me a C and I said "come on:"
> Int: and why?
> Javier: I don't really know why, she said that theoretically he had done more work than me, that you could see sentences he had written and sentences I had written and I don't know. . .she said it was obvious and after that I said "I'm fucking obtaining a good grade even if it is just to annoy her" and I thought "come on let's do this"
> . . .
> Int: did she do something like that after?
> Javier: never again because when she'd give us the option of working in groups or in pairs I would work alone so the grade is all mine

To the teacher, it was implausible that Javier could be perceived as being better than or as good as his partner despite the production of a co-written text. In Fortier's work (2018) on 'anglicised' colonials versus 'the British', she points to a combination of 'regimes of audibility' and 'visibility' which impose a racial hierarchy within the same language.

Rather than provide equality through language, instead racial hierarchies which subordinate RCs, are exacerbated through perceived proficiency in Catalan. The teacher reactivates a racial hierarchy through the co-naturalization of whiteness and Catalan that subordinates Javier in comparison with his partner. This racial hierarchy re-appears for Laila in the following extract:

> Laila: the PE teacher made exams in which you had to perform some activity in front of the whole class and if you volunteered to do it he would give you a higher mark and obviously I always

> volunteered because I love it but in my grade book he would give me a pass (.) never outstanding
> Int: did he explain why?
> Laila: one day he said something and I thought "now I understand" (.) he said in front of everyone he said "I can't believe that people from outside do this better than the rest of you I don't know why you don't make an effort"
> Int: what?
> Laila: I swear and I still remember (.) it remained with me

The term 'de fora' can be interpreted as from outside or from abroad. In the case of Javier and Laila, both teachers underline how students from 'here' are inherently superior. Javier's teacher seeks to redress the balance by punishing him with a lower grade and allocating higher marks to his partner. Similarly, Laila's teacher seems to downplay her contribution by never giving her more than a pass. The teachers react by reasserting what they perceive to be the rightful racial hierarchy which has been challenged by Javier and Laila.

After this collaboration, Javier chose to self-segregate to avoid further misjudgement by his teachers. As someone from a formerly colonized territory where racial hierarchies were imposed partly through language (Mignolo 2008), we see a version of this played out albeit at a highly personalized level due to the teacher, as the white listening subject who embodies the institution. There is a parallel here with wider political discourses around integration in which learning a language is essential to social cohesion and integration. However, minorities may seek protection from prejudicial treatment through the safety of being within familiar spaces or isolation. In this case, Javier seeks the safety of being alone having tried and failed to be judged as an equal within a Catalan language context. Instead, the teacher asserts a racial hierarchy that denies Javier a sense of equality.

Notions of integration

Omar touches upon the notion of integration in the following extract. Omar was born in Spain and his parents are from Morocco. From his perspective, it is white Catalans who both address RCs in Spanish and also complain that migrants do not want to speak Catalan.

> Omar: Sometimes they start talking to me directly in Spanish and I say "you see? this is the problem, you speak to us in Spanish and then you complain about the fact that we do not speak Catalan" and they say "yes, you're right" (. . .) they say "he is an immigrant and the language that he will mainly understand is Spanish" and when they talk to me in Spanish I answer back in Spanish and I say "do you speak Catalan?" and they say "yes, we speak Catalan" and this is the problem that you create for us and then you blame us of not wanting to learn

Switching from Catalan to Spanish in the presence of people who are perceived as being outsiders/foreigners is a practice that resonates with discourses around language choice and national identity in Catalonia (Aracil 1983, Woolard 1989, 2013). The 'malleability of whiteness' (Christian 2018) means that Spanish represents colonialism and a marker of whiteness in its own right (Mignolo 1995, but in this context and in relation to Catalan, it becomes a signifier of Otherness deployed to police racial non-belonging.

The perception that Omar is foreign demonstrates what Rosa (2019) describes as 'raciolinguistic enregisterment' defined as the ways 'race and language are rendered mutually perceivable. The raciolinguistic perspective directs attention not simply to the ways that language is socially constructed through race' (7). Under the 'Catalan gaze' (Corona and Block 2020), the co-naturalization of Catalan and whiteness is circulated through various forms of judgements that cohere to particular linguistic practices associated with certain racialized individuals and groups. This form of 'raciolinguistic profiling' often based on the 'reproduction and rearticulation of broader racial and linguistic structures within emergent contexts' (Rosa and Flores 2017: 16) goes to the heart of the issue around who is perceived to (not) belong.

THE 'UNDECIDEABILITY' OF LISTENING

Making others listen

Junts was established by a group of undergraduate students, including Omar, at the university. Most members had parents from Morocco and were Muslim, the dominant profile for those of migrant origin in the city. Junts primarily functions as a space for greater intercultural dialogue and anti-racism. They often appeared in the local media around various cultural activities such as celebrating the local holiday of Sant Jordi (Saint George's Day). With Junts, our work varied from operational issues such as working on their constitution and writing bids with them to gain funding to more outreach-based activities such as collaborating on teacher education around anti-racism and anti-Islamophobia as well as considering the viability of a programme to support the families of students to pass the Spanish citizenship test (taken in Spanish) in local schools among other things.

Bassel (2018) argues that the importance of listening is to make others listen. She explains, 'The mutuality of speaking and listening can show a willingness to take seriously what the other has to say and to work together to understand (laden with the risk of revealing deep differences and conflict that cannot be easily reconciled)' (Bassel 2018: 8). Thus, there is always the (im)possibility that making others listen may not lead to the changes hoped for. Listening in this respect is 'inter-dependent' in that possibilities for change rest on the intentions and actions of others, especially in relation to anti-racism.

Some students we interviewed previously laid the groundwork for our understanding of the lives of the students but Omar personified a thread that linked the initial interviews and Junts.

> Omar**:** I was the first guy[12] in my town to go to the University X, the first one, and that surprised me a lot. And when you did the interview, I already told you that it's very difficult to see immigrants at this university (...) When we held the interview we talked about that. And when the people from Junts came to me and asked me "what do you think about creating an association in which we make young immigrants aware and encourage them to reach university?" I thought it was really important because if they see us, young immigrants, they will see we are doing things and they will feel more motivated, they will see there are possibilities and we work to break stereotypes and to make them feel like they are not alone. They will see that everyone can complete their studies and go to university and reach their goals.

Junts recognize how racism is perpetuated and challenge it in the university and local community. However, the need for such a group in the first place highlights the sedimented whiteness of the university as an institution and the city itself. The inception of the group means that the conditions upon arrival when starting university were inhospitable. Ahmed (2012: 33) notes that groups such as Junts 'expose whiteness by demonstrating the necessity of this act of provision.' The university has an equality and diversity position regarding LGBTI and a gender policy but nothing in relation to race and racism. This means that the university reproduces the state-level 'racelessness' thereby emphasizing the lack of legitimacy of issues around racism.

The undecideability of Catalan

> Omar: The language used by the association was mainly Catalan because everyone who was from the university or those from vocational schools also spoke Catalan, even when the Catalan TV came, everything was in Catalan. Sometimes someone would understand Spanish better and in that case we would hold the meeting in Catalan, and that person would try to understand Catalan and then we would explain things, but otherwise we spoke mainly Catalan.

Junts made others listen, through the organization, with their impressive communication skills and understanding of racism aligned with tenacity and ingenuity. However, they still require the complicity of the 'white listening subject' (Rosa and Flores 2015, 2017) for any meaningful action beyond the interactional level; this translates to potential institutional and societal change. Junts play a role in the language normalization of Catalan. As the next generation of Catalans, they are able to reproduce the nation. However,

in buying into the 'promise' of language (Pennycook, 2007), they are supposedly closer to inhabiting spaces of power to improve social mobility. This does not make them any less immune to racism.

Here the notion of 'undecideability' becomes key. That is to say, the inherent instability in how interpretation may harm or benefit Junts (see McNamara 2012) as well as how claims to a collective identity may be subverted (Hesse 1997). For groups like Junts, they represent Catalan identity in many ways through their mastery of Catalan but through their presence as RCs, they also highlight the whiteness of Catalonia through their implicit need and demands for a more racially just space. Their capacity to create solidarities inhabiting hostile spaces while also seeking change and improvement which benefits others is highly impressive—all while studying themselves. Any wider change is at the behest of whether those listening are willing to support them.

CONCLUSION

This article outlines some ways racism permeates the lives of RCs. We have outlined just a few experiences and the extraordinary work of Junts when confronted with an oppressive environment. Their capacity to re-imagine their spaces to create better communities points to possibilities for the future. We would also urge others to listen to what our participants have said in this study, particularly in Europe. It is easy to be dismissive of racism for those accustomed to primarily inhabiting white, middle-class environments and for those for whom racially minoritized people are only ever subjects for data collection. To listen and act, although simple enough, is more intellectually demanding and transformative than to invest in 'epistemologies of ignorance' (Mills 2007) that function to maintain silences around racism and to stifle scholarship on race.

In terms of collaboration and developing ways of listening, we have demonstrated with little in the way of resources and finances how students and teachers can collaborate for social justice causes. Bassel (2018: 91) explains, 'From the academy a politics of listening can leverage the different forms of capital the University afford to work, as many colleagues do, with those who are often more creative and effective in generating new ways of speaking and listening.' We tried to collaborate to envisage breaking the 'brick walls' (Ahmed 2012) of whiteness. This means breaking comfortable silences with uncomfortable words and actions that are rarely listened to. Furthermore, it means a failure or unwillingness to listen and act is an implicit commitment to reproducing the racial status quo.

For applied linguists, the act of listening can provide telling insights about racism (Rosa and Flores 2015, 2017; Stoever 2016). Forms of listening and perception are conditioned by meaning which are in turn influenced by historical racial configurations. They can tell us much about *who* is/is not listened to, *how and why*. We build on not only 'regimes of perception' (Lo 2021) through the re-articulation of racism, but also position listening as a first step in breaking

dichotomies for collaboration that transcend institutional and professional positions (Bassel 2018) in relation to social justice that affects wider society.

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ENDNOTES

1 This is a translation from Catalan.
2 The term 'racializado' in Spain and 'racialitzat' in Catalonia alludes to those who would be referred to as people of colour particularly in activist circles.
3 We credit our usage of the term 'co-naturalisation' in relation with language race to Flores and Rosa's raciolinguistic work.
4 This excludes those who have been naturalized in recent years—53,084 in Catalonia in 2019 (Idescat 2020b).
5 We wish to preserve the anonymity of the town, the participants and Junts.
6 Given the scarcity of statistical information, this is the closest we can get to finding work on racialized populations.
7 The Spanish government declined to do the same.
8 For a further account on the tensions and ambiguities of choosing Spanish or Catalan to conduct fieldwork in Catalonia see (Gallego-Balsà 2020).
9 See here: http://ec.europa.eu/eurax-ess/index.cfm/rights/europeanCharter
10 For the sake of convenience and space, this and subsequent extracts from the discussion session and the interviews are all presented in English whereas they were in Catalan in the original.
11 This is an extract of the focus group session conducted with most of the interviewed students. The language used is Catalan along the session and in this specific moment it is very clear that the people at the post-office spoke Catalan to avoid being understood by Laila and that Laila addressed them back in Catalan, proving her capacity to understand and speak the language.
12 From context, Omar means he was the first racialized person to attend university in his town.

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