

Global Perspectives on Linguistic Profiling and Diversity Signifiers in Educational Settings:

An Annotated Bibliography

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Contextual Literature (4 articles)

Rosa, J. & Flores, N. (2017). Do you hear what I hear? Raciolinguistic ideologies and culturally sustaining pedagogies. In D. Paris & H.S. Alim (Eds.), *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world* (pp. 175-190). Teachers College Press.

Rosa and Flores made the case for reframing current frameworks of thought surrounding language learning for Latino/Latina/Latinx students in U.S. public schools. American educational institutions have had tendencies to treat particular linguistic practices as **deficits**, whereas the authors pushed for educators and policymakers to view these practices as **resources** instead. Supporters of **asset-based pedagogy (ABP)** often made the assumption that students of color could become successful only when they learned to produce the appropriate academic codes. Rosa and Flores called upon readers to challenge such assumptions, which they argued could lead to the categorical devaluation of Latino/Latina/Latinx students' linguistic practices. Moreover, they highlighted that the same linguistic practices that get constructed as linguistically "deviant" also get interpreted as "normative" or "innovative" when produced by privileged White language users. Asset-based pedagogy, while well-intentioned, could reproduce inequality by valuing and devaluing various linguistic practices as appropriate or inappropriate. The authors proposed **culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP)** as an alternative approach that would treat linguistic practices of students of color as central components to all stages of their learning.

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Savini, C. (2021, January 27). *How professors can and should combat linguistic prejudice in their classes*. Inside Higher Ed. <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2021/01/27/how-professors-can-and-should-combat-linguistic-prejudice-their-classes-opinion>

Savini's article covered her experience working in the writing center at a primarily white institution (PWI), and in particular highlighted the demoralizing experiences that students shared in regards to efforts to conform to academic expectations. Oftentimes, the act of marking papers down for failure to demonstrate Standard Academic English (SAE) became the primary reason behind the devaluation of the linguistic practices that students grew up with. Several recommendations for combatting linguistic prejudice included for instructors to educate themselves about students' language backgrounds, assess students for their understanding of the content rather than penalization of non-SAE writing, allow students to free-write in their native languages and dialects, treat students' multilingual abilities as a strength rather than weakness, question patterns of discourse in the U.S., acknowledge linguistic diversity in the syllabus, utilize discipline-appropriate methods of countering linguistic prejudice, learn about the impacts of linguistic bias, and lastly, serve as an advocate to raise awareness of linguistic prejudice on campus.

Gay, R. (2021, March 17). *A White man's bad day*. The Audacity. <https://audacity.substack.com/p/a-white-mans-bad-day>

This article primarily engaged with the recent shooting tragedy in Atlanta at three massage parlors that ended in 8 deaths, 6 of whom were Asian women. However, its focus on the propagation of hateful rhetoric during the Donald Trump administration made it relevant to the ways in which linguistic prejudice in educational settings as well as in virtual spaces could enact

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damage going well beyond psychological harm to those targeted. Author Roxane Gay called out the Cherokee County Sheriff's Department for centering the story of the suspect rather than of the women he killed and dismissing this act of violence as the result of a "really bad day". Now and in the past, when those in positions of authority refused to acknowledge hate crimes as such and racist acts remain unpunished with no consequences, these omissions set the tone for further devaluation of human lives and enable debasing rhetoric ("Wuhan virus", "China virus", "kung flu") to persist both on the streets and within classrooms as institutionally sanctioned language. This contemporary example and poignant commentary demonstrated the far-reaching and much more serious impacts that linguistic profiling (and subsequent dehumanization of linguistic practices) could have upon marginalized communities.

Joseph, R. L. (2017). What's the difference with "difference"? Equity, communication, and the politics of difference. *International Journal of Communication*, 11, 3306–3326.

In a public lecture series given at the University of Washington (Seattle), Joseph closely examined the terminologies used to describe difference, arguing for a greater focus upon equity over having "more or different words" to characterize the "process of change-making" (p. 3306). The linguistic meta-analysis highlighted the need to interrogate emerging streams of academic discourse in which the "right words" easily became "tokens" with which institutions "stave off allegations of racism" (p. 3306), while unearthing previously overlooked power dynamics in the use and overuse of certain phrases in both formal dialogue and everyday conversations. How did words get popularized throughout various historical periods and major political shifts, and what underlying purpose(s) did this popularization serve at the time? The lasting rhetoric of "tolerance" had in some ways turned the Civil Rights Movement into an oversimplified,

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bifurcated mythology and downplayed Martin Luther King Jr.'s politics to become more 'palatable' for mainstream consumption. Similarly, the emergence of "multiculturalism" from the 1960s ended up a sore point of debate. On one end, scholars and practitioners welcomed this as an equity-centered intervention allowing for a more culturally responsive approach. On the other end, critics pointed out that the focus on culture had a whitewashing effect which not only avoided the real concerns at hand but also applied a reductionist approach to institutionalizing multicultural education as the "celebration of ethnic foods and festivals" (p. 3312). Lastly, the term "diversity" drew skepticism as institutions attempted to incorporate this vague concept into their official statements and initiatives, leading some scholars to perceive these efforts as largely performative and empty of any real significance. Given these salient insights into the nature and development of DE&I lexicon, any discussions surrounding difference that fail to center equity would render even the most well-intentioned words susceptible to co-optation.

Empirical Research Literature (6 articles)

Ali, A. I. (2009). *Finding home: Formulations of race and nationhood among Muslim college students in Southern California* [Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles].

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/366905398/abstract/878AF9AD6719469DPQ/1>

Ali's dissertation research centered around how Muslim youth navigated a relationship to broader American culture through lenses of domestic and international state policies, media representations, and cultural production, with a focus upon how the events of 9/11/2001 impacted these elements of their personal identities in public social spaces. The perspectives of the 24 Muslim students interviewed reflected both prescriptive and performative dimensions, and the use of language ideology to frame their experiences demonstrated that language became not "simply a signifier of the physical word, but... [also] a manifestation of the political world" (p.

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22). However, language also had the power to “create counter-hegemonic discourse and alter power relations,” even in the educational setting of a college campus (p. 28). The implications of this study in a learning context revealed the need for active efforts to protect Muslim-identifying students on college campuses, critically evaluate acceptable versus unacceptable speech on those campuses, engage Muslim students on their concerns and fears regarding freedom of speech, and continually interrogate and reassess what diversity really means at each respective university in order to ensure diversity in the student support services and programming available.

Bal, A. (2014). Becoming In/competent Learners in the United States: Refugee Students’

Academic Identities in the Figured World of Difference. *International Multilingual*

Research Journal, 8(4), 271–290. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19313152.2014.952056>

Bal’s study examined an oft-understudied demographic group—newly arrived Muslim Turk refugee students at an urban charter school in the Southwestern United States. Within this American educational context, the automatic categorization of these students into the “English Language Learner” (ELL) label created barriers to their participation in multiple cultural worlds and also generated stigmatized identifications that resulted in exclusion from general education classrooms. The researcher applied a collective case study methodology with a purposeful sampling approach (N=24) with participants comprised of 6 Ahıska students, 12 Ahıska parents, and 6 educators. This ethnography surfaced a difference-as-deficit cultural model and generic prototypes derived from institutionally sanctioned terminologies (ELL), which served to influence educators’ perceptions of these students and led to formation of “racialized learner identities” and/or special education identifications (p. 281). Until schools (such as the one

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examined here) recognize the complexity and fluidity of these students' individual identities, systemic transformation would remain difficult to achieve for both the learners and educators.

Busch, B. (2010). School language profiles: Valorizing linguistic resources in heteroglossic situations in South Africa. *Language and Education*, 24(4), 283–294.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09500781003678712>

Busch launched an interrogation of the “monolinguilization” of literacy learning in South Africa, making the point that the continued racialization of language issues stood at odds with the overall stated policy of linguistic diversity. The research highlighted the biographic approach as an effective way to understand how affect influences literacy and language learning. An intervention workshop formulated to address assumptions behind traditional learner-centered school language policies included the use of ‘language portraits’ to help students visualize alternative representational models of spoken or written words (in this case, in Afrikaans and in English). The findings confirmed the “predominant status of English in the current South African school system” (p. 292), as well as the continued use of “overtly racializing discourse” in apartheid-period materials in some classrooms. Shifting from a learner-centered to a speaker-centered approach and making visible the heteroglossic resources within the school community would help lay down the foundations for principles based in linguistic equity—with potential for implementation at both the school and classroom levels.

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Fasching-Varner, K. J. (2013). "Uhh, You Know," Don't You?: White Racial Bonding in the Narrative of White Pre-Service Teachers. *The Journal of Educational Foundations*, 27(3/4), 21–41.

Fasching-Varner flipped the spotlight from students to teachers in this examination of semantic phrases (i.e., "you know") within White pre-service educators' racial identification and bonding processes. Written with the re-election of President Barack Obama in mind, this study selected a purposive sample from a teacher education program at a college in the Northeast United States and engaged the participants using a testimonial life history approach to investigate their perspectives on diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice topics. The findings showed that participants enjoyed and took comfort Whiteness in a way that allowed them to retain distance from negative aspects of racism; Whiteness "as property value" gave individuals who identified as such the right to exclude; White racial bonding practices served to create shared meaning and behaviors of Whiteness conferred certain rewards and benefits; and finally, racial bonding among White-identified individuals allowed for the maintenance of reputation and status associated with such membership. Therefore, in primarily white institutions and educational settings, the sustained trend of largely White and female teachers in the workforce means that the "teacher/student racial mismatch" represent only one of many challenges when it comes to disrupting the "privileged mechanisms [White teachers] use to discuss race" (p. 12).

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Jiang, S. (2021). Diversity without integration? Racialization and spaces of exclusion in international higher education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 42(1), 32–47.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2020.1847635>

Jiang represented one of the studies that focused on how international students navigated racialized academic and social spaces, as well as how their socioeconomic status led to the simultaneous racialization of Black and Brown communities at a predominantly white institution (PWI) in the U.S. Midwest region. The author brought up the treatment of Chinese students by higher education institutions as “diversity signifiers” and representation of financial capital, while acknowledging complexities of internalized ethnocentric ideologies that mimic ‘whiteness’ within the American context. This transnational ethnography utilized purposive sampling techniques to select 15 participants for observation, in addition to semi-structured interviews conducted with 8 students’ parents and 7 university employees—the researcher also identified that having the positionality as a Chinese scholar allowed for both Mandarin and English interview modalities and opportunities to establish rapport within the communities of interest. Findings suggested several points: 1) international students’ racial identities necessitated greater visibility within university records and demographical data; 2) campus inclusion education would help international students seek better support in identifying and dealing with incidents of discrimination and stereotyping; 3) intercultural programming would place international students in closer proximity with domestic students by opening the possibility for interracial dormitory living arrangements and articulating social justice education through a global context; and 4) ethnic studies courses should get cross-listed with international studies courses to foster more productive dialogue surrounding race for both international and domestic student populations. Owing to the recency of the publication in 2021, the author incorporated calls for solidarity

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amongst Asian-Black-Latinx communities, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic uncovered the depths of America's own history of racially motivated violence and oppression.

Ramjattan, V. A. (2015). Lacking the right aesthetic. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 34(8), 692–704. <http://dx.doi.org.libproxy2.usc.edu/10.1108/EDI-03-2015-0018>

Ramjattan enacted a similar perspective change as Fasching-Varner, in that the research focused upon the impact of employment discrimination upon nonwhite teachers at private language schools in Toronto, Canada. Ramjattan pointed out the assumptions within English Language Teaching (ELT) practice created a certain aesthetic that opened space for racial microaggressions enacted against teachers who either through physical appearance or spoken mannerisms fell outside this aesthetic. A critical race methodological approach and semi-structured narrative interviews drew upon perspectives of ten participants in a purposive sample. While the size of the sample and specificity of institutional type allowed for little room for generalization, the findings revealed several themes, including confusion and misperceptions from employers towards the teachers' names (which led in one instance to linguistic racial profiling); the categorical denial of teaching positions to nonnative speakers (while conferring linguistic superiority to native speakers); and the unquestioning association of whiteness with expertise (and justifying such racial profiling as purely based upon "customer preferences"). Ultimately, Ramjattan found that the 'right' racial or linguistic aesthetic as defined by employers made it exceedingly difficult for nonwhite teachers to overcome the barriers set by race-based assumptions of superiority or inferiority, and argued for further study of the potential differences

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between how employment discrimination affects nonwhite native and nonnative speakers of English during their job search processes.

Slavkov, N. (2016). In search of the right questions: Language background profiling at Ontario public schools. *The Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 19(1), 22–45.

Slavkov positioned this study in the context of public education in Ontario, Canada. As reported by the Ontario Ministry of Education in 2010, this region contains one of the “most multilingual student populations in the world” and has “about 20% of children registered in English schools as having another ‘first’ language” (p. 23). This complex linguistic landscape means that the processes that go into creating student language profiles become even more critical in terms of how schools determine resource distribution and the effectiveness of the services they provide to these students. The author argued for the need to re-evaluate terms such as “native language” or “monolingualism” and expand traditional definitions to go beyond the restrictive confines of an occidental worldview. In studying language profiling practices of Ontario public schools, the research sought to unearth assumptions that both parents and school boards might make when providing information in language background registration forms. The findings suggested that while school boards in the collected sample did demonstrate a high degree of awareness towards the complexities of bilingualism and multilingualism, many of them still lacked the theoretical and methodological tools that would allow the creation of more “accurate, thorough, and consistent student language profiles” (p. 38). Slavkov identified a higher-than-expected level of quality in language profiling processes at Ontario public education institutions, but also acknowledged that this continuing trend away from traditional monolingualistic attitudes towards bilingual and multilingual world views necessitated more research to parse out the subtleties.