



Toward Sociolinguistic Justice for Racialized Youth

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Structure of the talk

- ▶ Background: Sociolinguistic injustice and sociolinguistic justice for California's Latina/o youth
- ▶ The research context: The SKILLS program
- ▶ Four ways of working toward sociolinguistic justice with racialized youth
- ▶ Concluding thoughts





Part 1

Background

Language and anti-Latina/o racism in the United States



- ▶ Julio Cammarota and Michelle Aguilera 2012, “ ‘By the Time I Get to Arizona’: Race, Language, and Education in America’s Racist State”
 - ▶ Arizona’s anti-Latina/o laws
 - 2000: Ban on bilingual education (2000)
 - 2010: Ban on Chicano studies classes on the grounds that they “promote the overthrow of the United States government” and teach students to “resent or hate other races or classes of people”
 - 2010: Legalized racial profiling of anyone “suspected” of being an unauthorized immigrant



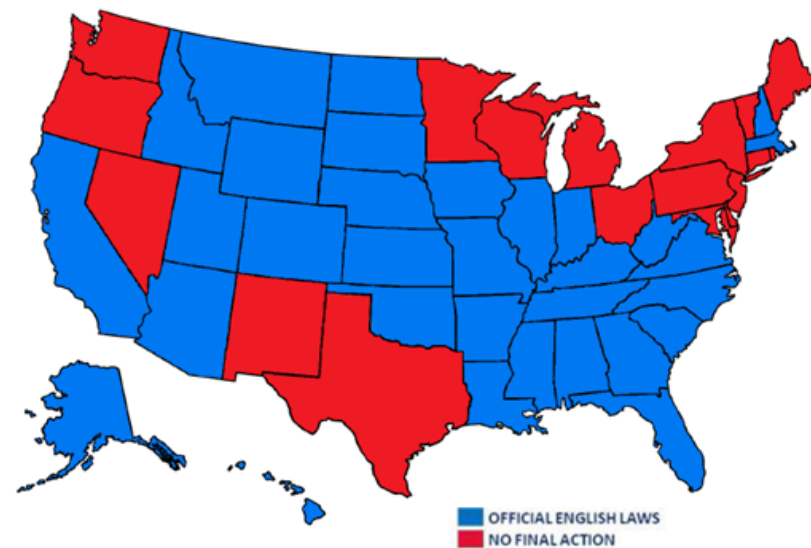
California: Another racist state





Proposition 63 (1986)

- ▶ Amended the California constitution to make English the official language of the state
 - ▶ Still in effect
- ▶ First in an ongoing wave of xenophobic official-English laws across the U.S.



Alabama (1990)
Alaska (1998)
Arizona (2006)
Arkansas (1987)
California (1986)
Colorado (1988)
Florida (1988)
Georgia (1986 & 1996)
Hawaii (1978)
Idaho (2007)
Illinois (1969)
Indiana (1984)
Iowa (2002)
Kansas (2007)
Kentucky (1984)
Louisiana (1811)
Massachusetts (1975)
Mississippi (1987)
Missouri (1998 & 2008)
Montana (1995)
Nebraska (1920)
New Hampshire (1995)
North Carolina (1987)
North Dakota (1987)
Oklahoma (2010)
South Carolina (1987)
South Dakota (1995)
Tennessee (1984)
Utah (2000)
Virginia (1981 & 1996)
Wyoming (1996)
West Virginia (2016)



Proposition 187 (1994)

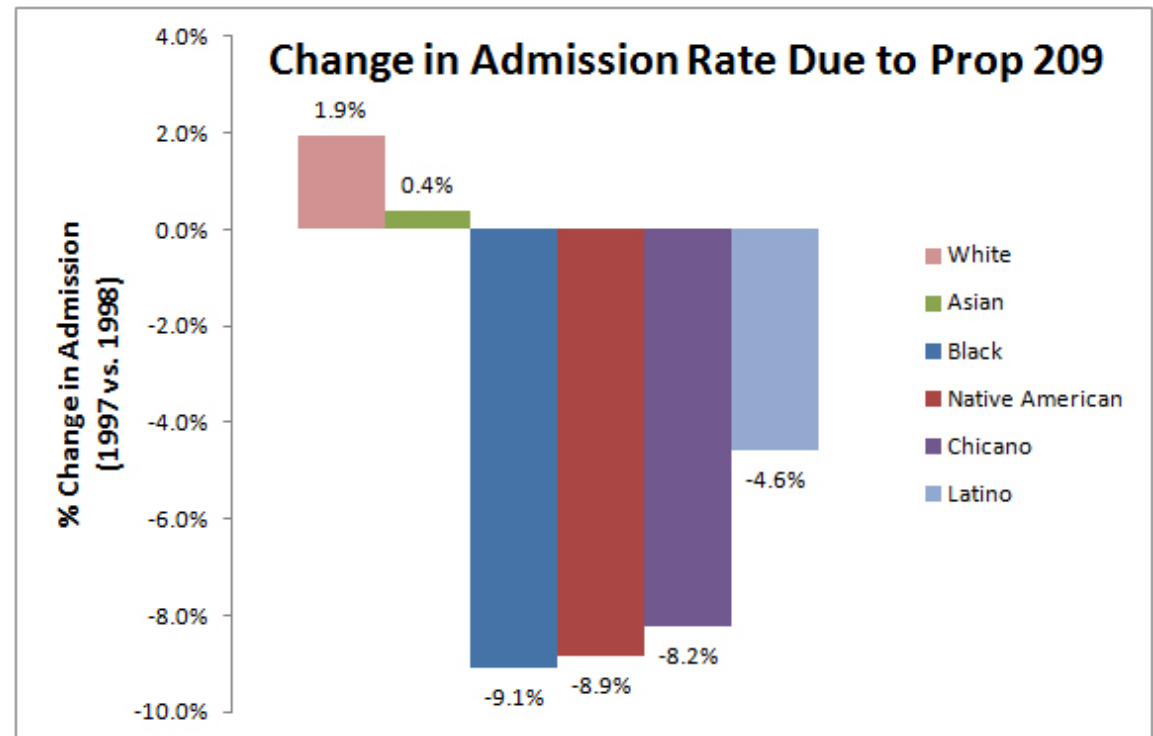
- ▶ So-called “Save Our State” initiative
- ▶ Banned essential public services such as health care and education for unauthorized immigrants
- ▶ Ruled unconstitutional in 1997, officially repealed in 2014





Proposition 209 (1996)

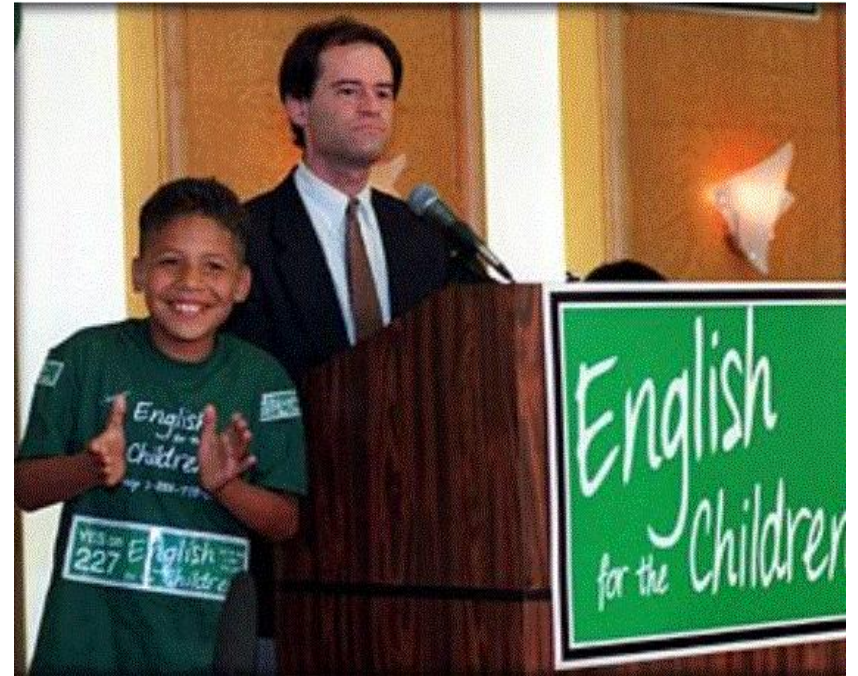
- ▶ Banned affirmative action (consideration of race/ethnicity and gender) in California's public employment and education sectors
- ▶ Led to dramatic drops in admission of students of color at the University of California
- ▶ Still in effect





Proposition 227 (1998)

- ▶ Banned almost all bilingual education and replaced it with one year of structured English immersion
- ▶ The entrepreneur who funded the campaign also funded similar initiatives in several other states
- ▶ Repealed in 2016 with the passage of Proposition 58





Santa Barbara: A racist city

- ▶ January 1998: Santa Barbara's all-white school board unanimously votes to eliminate bilingual education
- ▶ English learners were immediately moved to “mainstream” classes
- ▶ “[White parents] don't want their kids to go to a school where half the kids speak Spanish. People want their children to have a happy, open learning experience.” (Santa Barbara School Board member)



Santa Barbara's dual immersion bilingual education school



- ▶ Established in 1999 as a charter school with a strong social justice focus
- ▶ Proposition 58 authorizes school districts to create bilingual schools



Language and social justice in applied linguistics



- ▶ Netta Avineri, Laura R. Graham, Eric Johnson, Robin Riner, & Jonathan Rosa, eds. (forthcoming), *Case Studies in Language and Social Justice* (Routledge)
- ▶ Ingrid Piller (2016), *Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice: An Introduction to Applied Sociolinguistics*
- ▶ Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, Robert Phillipson, Ajit K. Mohanty, and Minati Panda, eds. (2009), *Social Justice through Multilingual Education*





Social justice

- ▶ the struggle for self-determination for sociopolitically subordinated groups and individuals through the redistribution of power and resources
- ▶ social justice versus rights

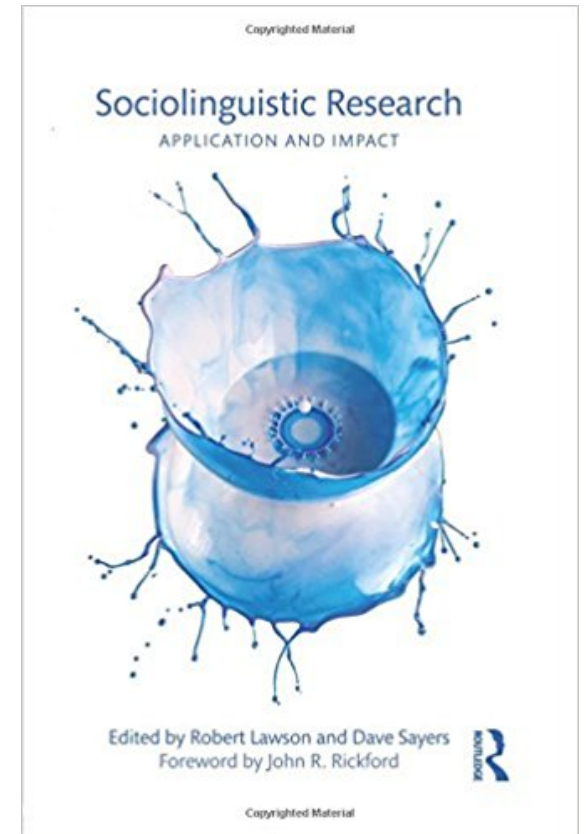
rights	social justice
top-down	bottom-up
universalizing	particularizing
governmental and institutional	grassroots and collective
representative and global	participatory and local
policy-based solutions	practice-based solutions





Sociolinguistic justice

- ▶ self-determination for linguistically subordinated individuals and groups in sociopolitical struggles over language
 - ▶ Bucholtz et al. (2014), “Sociolinguistic Justice in the Schools: Student Researchers as Linguistic Experts”
 - ▶ Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee (2016), “Beyond Empowerment: Accompaniment and Sociolinguistic Justice in a Youth Research Program” (in Lawson & Sayers 2016)



Goals of sociolinguistic justice 1: Linguistic diversity and equity



- ▶ **Linguistic valorization**

- ▶ Awareness and appreciation of linguistic variation and language diversity

- ▶ **Linguistic legitimation**

- ▶ The validity of speakers' linguistic repertoires across social spheres

- ▶ **Linguistic inheritance**

- ▶ Learning and learning about one's “own” languages, dialects, and styles



Goals of sociolinguistic justice 2: Linguistic power and authority



- ▶ **Linguistic access**
 - ▶ Learning and learning about powerful languages, dialects, and styles
- ▶ **Linguistic expertise**
 - ▶ Recognition of all language users as linguistic experts
- ▶ **Critical understanding of language inequality and language ideologies**
 - ▶ Scrutiny of structures and belief systems that reproduce oppression





Race and language

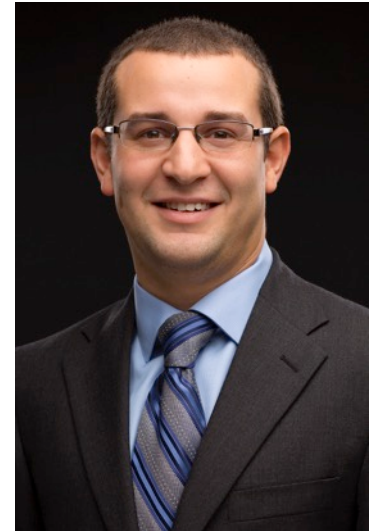
- ▶ All human beings are positioned within systems and processes of racialization
- ▶ As a social construct for claiming power and resources, race must be continually reproduced discursively and materially
- ▶ Race and language are semiotically entangled and jointly produced



A raciolinguistic perspective



- ▶ Nelson Flores & Jonathan Rosa 2015, “Undoing Appropriateness,” and forthcoming article in *Language in Society*
- ▶ “the ideological construction and value of standardized language practices are anchored in what we term *raciolinguistic ideologies* that conflate certain racialized bodies with linguistic deficiency unrelated to any objective linguistic practices” (p. 150)





A word about whiteness

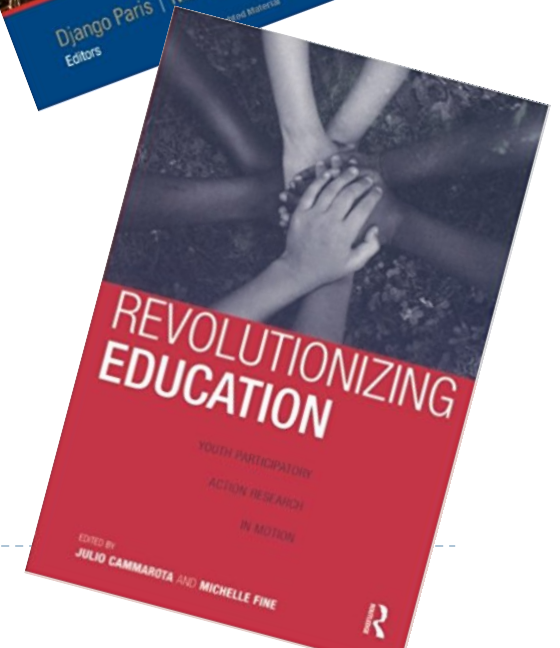
- ▶ Whiteness is the foundation of the racial system and a construct for claiming/preserving power
- ▶ The responsibilities of white-identified scholars and educators
 - ▶ To learn primarily by reading and listening, not by asking people of color to teach us
 - ▶ To continually scrutinize our own whiteness and how it limits and distorts our perceptions
 - ▶ To be open to critique (especially from people of color)
 - ▶ To work to dismantle the hegemonic power of whiteness through our research and teaching



Race and social justice for youth: Starting points for researchers



- ▶ Decolonizing, antiracist, youth-centered pedagogies and methodologies
- ▶ Django Paris & Maisha T. Winn (2012), *Humanizing Research: Decolonizing Qualitative Inquiry with Youth and Communities*
- ▶ Julio Cammarota & Michelle Fine (2008), *Revolutionizing Education: Youth Participatory Action Research in Motion*





Part 2

The SKILLS Program

School Kids Investigating Language in Life & Society (SKILLS)



- ▶ A collaboration between Santa Barbara area youth-serving institutions and UCSB faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates
 - ▶ Critical sociocultural linguistics curriculum
 - ▶ Youth-led research/activism
 - ▶ College preparation
 - ▶ Graduate and undergraduate training
 - ▶ Community engagement
-



Goals of the SKILLS program



- ▶ To foster sociolinguistic justice
 - ▶ Youth as experts, knowledge producers, and changemakers
- ▶ To engage graduate and undergraduate students in local communities
 - ▶ Teaching, mentoring, and research
- ▶ To engage families and communities in student research/activism
 - ▶ Raising local awareness of language issues



Key characteristics of the SKILLS curriculum



- ▶ **Inquiry-based:** Students actively engage in the process of creating knowledge and exchanging ideas
- ▶ **Student-centered:** Builds on linguistic and cultural resources that students bring to the classroom
- ▶ **Critically engaged:** Supports students critical thought and action regarding language, race, and power in their lives
- ▶ **Communication-driven:** Focuses on oral and written communication skills
- ▶ **Flexible:** Adapts to the needs of each participating partner site





SKILLS Program history

- ▶ Founded in 2010
 - ▶ Has served over 800 students aged 6-19
 - ▶ Mostly Latina/o
 - ▶ Multiple contexts
 - ▶ Urban, suburban, rural
 - ▶ Students range from college-bound to “at-risk”
 - ▶ Taught in English and/or Spanish
 - ▶ Most students receive free college credit for the class
-





The SKILLS curriculum

- ▶ Five months long
- ▶ Varies by site
- ▶ Linguistic creativity
 - ▶ slang, translanguageing
- ▶ Language and family
 - ▶ language policy, brokering
- ▶ Language and power
 - ▶ linguistic racism, ideologies
- ▶ Language variation
 - ▶ varieties of Spanish, English
- ▶ Instructor/student interests
 - ▶ gender and sexuality,
language documentation,
translation, music, media ...



Experiencing college: UCSB Day



- ▶ Early in the program, youth visit UCSB to meet their colleagues at other sites and experience college life
 - ▶ Learn how to prepare for, apply to, and adjust to college
 - ▶ Visit classes
 - ▶ Explore campus
 - ▶ Interact with undergraduates with similar backgrounds
 - ▶ i.e., the first generation in their family to attend college



Sharing knowledge: SKILLS Day



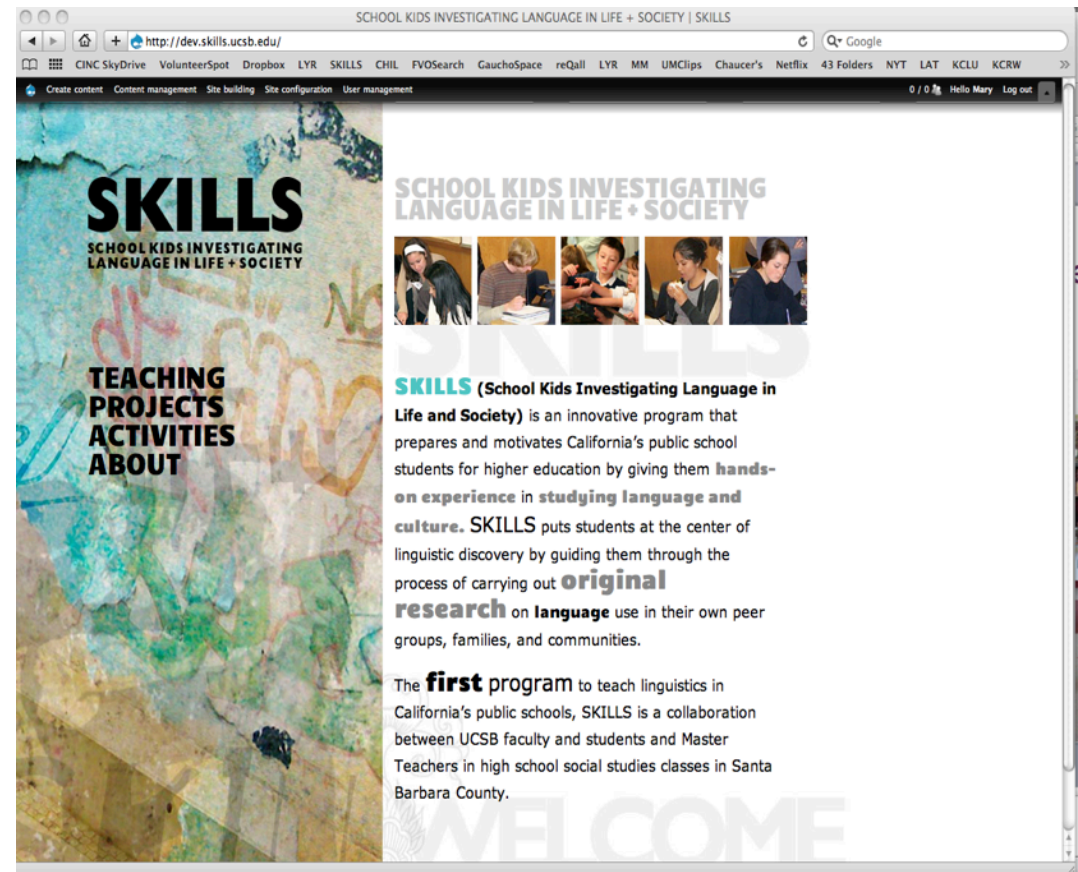
- ▶ At the end of the program, the student researcher-activists return to UCSB
 - ▶ Present the results of their work to scholars, students, and the local community
 - ▶ Often, a transformative experience



Spreading knowledge: The SKILLS website



- ▶ Showcases students' original projects
- ▶ Provides comprehensive teaching materials for educators
- ▶ www.skills.ucsb.edu





The SKILLS team structure

- ▶ Graduate Teaching Fellows
- ▶ Partner Teachers
- ▶ Undergraduate Mentors
- ▶ Undergraduate Field Researchers and Interns
- ▶ Youth Researcher-Activists



Source of several examples



- ▶ Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee, eds., (forthcoming), *Feeling It: Language, Race, and Affect in Latina/o Youth Learning* (Routledge)
- ▶ Based on a specially funded interdisciplinary collaboration involving:
 - ▶ A year-long graduate seminar on language, race, and learning
 - ▶ A large undergraduate general education class on language, race, and learning
 - ▶ Research and teaching on and in the SKILLS program



WHEN DISCIPLINES, RESEARCH, AND TEACHING INTERSECT





Part 3

Working toward justice with racialized youth

Advancing sociolinguistic justice for racialized youth



1. Focus on youth experiences of racialization through language and vice versa
2. Recognize the multiple forms of expertise of youth of color
3. Understand affect as central to language and race
4. Approach teaching and learning as a multidirectional partnership



1. Youth, language, and racialization



- ▶ Through a raciolinguistic perspective, “race and language are rendered mutually perceivable”
- ▶ Jonathan Rosa (forthcoming), *Looking Like a Language, Sounding Like a Race: Raciolinguistic ideologies and the Learning of Latinidad* (Oxford University Press)





Source of Example (1)

- ▶ Adanari Zarate (forthcoming), “‘You Don’t *Look* Like You Speak English’: Raciolinguistic Profiling and Latino Youth Agency,” in Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee, *Feeling It*



Example (1): Alberto on looking like a language



Alberto: Um, freshman year I worked at [a local] Taco Bell and some people would come in, and I guess they'd take the "safe route" and speak Spanish? So I would respond in French.

Audrey: Okay so challenging those borders, where people place those borders around you and saying, "Oh no. You thought this was what it was but it's not. Let me show you."





Source of Example (2)

- ▶ Wences and Bucholtz (in preparation), “‘You Sound Pocha’: Sociolinguistic Justice and the Contestation of Language Ideologies by California Latina Youth”
- ▶ Lizette Wences was a SKILLS undergraduate mentor at the time of the study
 - ▶ She’s now a graduate student at Indiana University



Example (2): Reyna on sounding like a race



Or if you go to Taco <[t^hakou]> Bell. And you say, “I want a taco <[tako]>.” Then they’re like, “Oh, she’s obviously, Mexican, because she, speaks it with, like she says, taco <[tako]> the correct way.” Instead of <[t^hakou]>.

2. The underappreciated competencies of youth of color

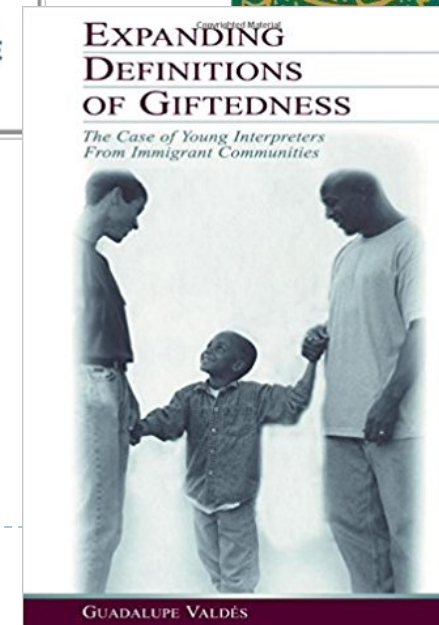


- ▶ Linguistic expertise
- ▶ Cultural expertise
- ▶ Knowledge production
- ▶ Sociopolitical agency



The linguistic expertise of racialized youth

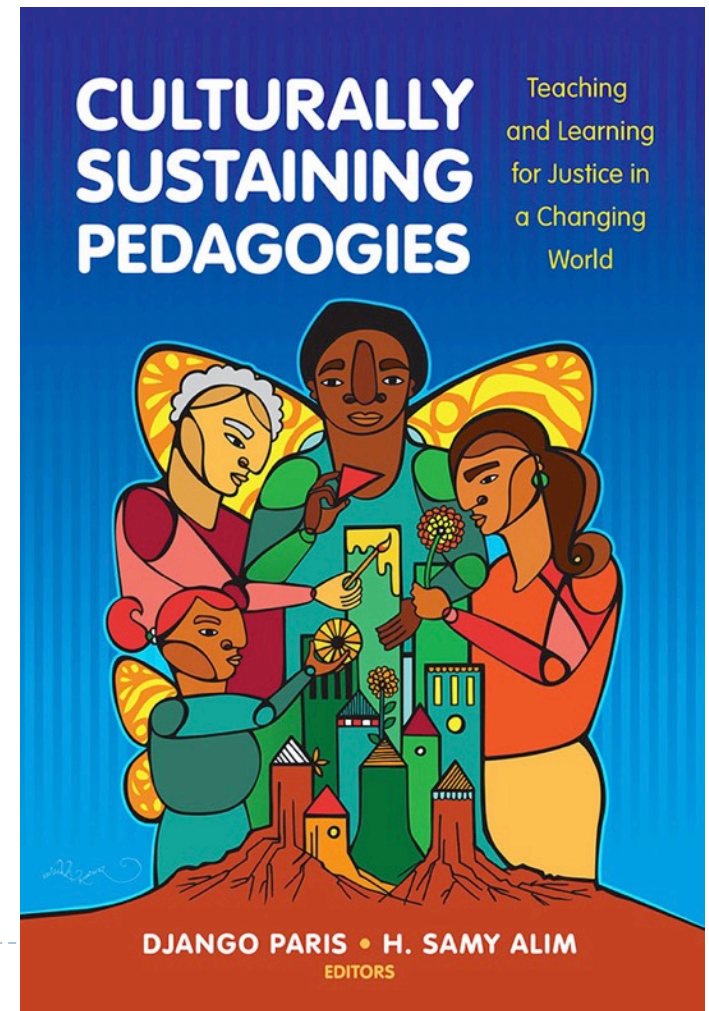
- ▶ mastery of racialized and other sociopolitically marginalized languages and varieties
- ▶ translinguaging practices (García & Li 2013)
- ▶ receptive bilingualism
- ▶ language brokering (Valdés 2003, Orellana 2009)





Source of Example (3)

- Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee (2017), “Language and Culture as Sustenance,” in Django Paris & H. Samy Alim (eds.), *Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for Justice in a Changing World*



Example (3): Isabel, expert translanguager



Yo, habla, diferentes terms, como con mi familia, yo digo, “¿Qué onda?” “¡Chales!” “¿Qué on-” Yo pongo la basura de mi mamá. Aquí I’m like, “Battle!” “What’s up then?” Yeah.

Translanguaging as linguistic expertise



- ▶ technical linguistic lexis
 - ▶ *terms* (rather than *words*)
- ▶ codeswitching to organize discourse
 - ▶ Code choice iconically aligns with Isabel's self-reported Spanish and English slang use by context
 - *con mi familia* v. *aquí* (in school)
- ▶ translanguaging
 - ▶ *yo habla* (compare Spanish *yo hablo*)
 - ▶ *yo pongo la basura de mi mamá* ('I trash-talk with my mom')
- ▶ Isabel isn't a "bad" speaker of Spanish—she's an advanced speaker of California Spanglish!



Devaluing translanguaging: Isabel's mother's response



- ▶ Source: Zuleyma Carruba-Rogel in Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee (forthcoming), *Feeling It*
- ▶ “Ella mucho español no sabe, y lo poco que sabe es bien mocho. ... Yo a ella muchas veces “Agarra [clases de] español, agarra español.”
- ▶ ‘She doesn’t know much Spanish, and the little that she knows is really choppy. ... I [have told] her many times, “Take Spanish [classes], take Spanish.”’



Zuleyma Carruba-Rogel



Defending translanguaging: Zuleyma's response



- ▶ “... unos de los grandes enfoques de la clase es de que los estudiantes ... valoren su, los diferentes idiomas que ellos hablan. No nada más el inglés y el español ... pero también la mezcla, el spanglish, la mezcla del español y el inglés, eso es una técnica también porque estás navegando dos mundos lingüísticos a la misma vez. Gracias por reconocerlo.”
 - ▶ ‘... one of the big focuses of the class is for the students to value their, the different languages that they speak. Not only English and Spanish, but also the mixture, Spanglish, the mixing of Spanish and English, this is also a skill because you're navigating two linguistic worlds at the same time. Thank you for recognizing it.’
-





3. Affect, language, and race

- ▶ **affect**: the simultaneously cognitive, perceptual, and emotional experience-action of embodied, material encounter with the world
 - ▶ Not a product of individual minds but an interactional and ideological negotiation



The centrality of affect in language



- ▶ Aneta Pavlenko (2006), *Emotions and Multilingualism; Bilingual Minds*
- ▶ Kanavillil Rajagopalan 2004, “Emotion and Language Politics: The Brazilian Case”
 - ▶ “an important part of the reason why we linguists have traditionally had little or no appreciable success in influencing public opinion with respect to language, let alone having a say in language planning and state policies, is that we have by and large tended to overlook or downplay the emotional aspect of language” (p. 108)





The centrality of affect in race

- ▶ Ulla Berg & Ana Y. Ramos-Zayas 2015, “Racializing Affect”
 - ▶ “racialization processes have been integral to, and at times constitutive of, the very conceptions of ‘emotion,’ ‘feeling,’ or ‘sentiment’ that have historically produced, highlighted, and explained racial difference and served to uphold dominant racial ideologies” (p. 654)





Source of Example (4)

- ▶ Katie Lateef-Jan (forthcoming), “To Find the Right Words: Bilingual Students’ Reflections on Translation and Translatability,” in Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee, *Feeling It*



Example (4): Lucy and the affects of Chicano Spanish



I've always known that "Chicano Spanish" was known as "a bastard language" & it's made me feel bad for knowing & speaking it. No one in my life speaks "Spainard Spanish" so when I was taught that in my Spanish classes I would get upset because I would interrupt into my Spanish & I would be told I was wrong. Same defination, same idea, different ways to say it & I would be "wrong". I didn't understand.

I've always known that "Chicano Spanish" was known as "a bastard language" and it's made me feel bad for knowing and speaking it. No one in my life speaks "Spainard Spanish" so when I was taught that in my Spanish classes I would get upset because I would interrupt into my Spanish & I would be told I was wrong. Same defanition, same idea, different ways to say it & I would be "wrong." I didn't understand.



Affective agency

- ▶ “the production of social action informed by and involving embodied, emotional encounter with the world”
- ▶ Juan Sebastian Ferrada, Mary Bucholtz, and Meghan Corella (forthcoming), “ ‘Respetar mi idioma’: The Affective Agency of Latina/o Youth,” *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*





Source of Example (5)

- ▶ Audrey Lopez (forthcoming), in Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee, *Feeling It*
- ▶ Youth language brokers have a range of affective responses to translating and interpreting for adults
- ▶ SKILLS students' reported affects when brokering
 - ▶ “I feel happy”
 - ▶ “I feel proud”
 - ▶ “I feel annoyed”
 - ▶ “I feel stressed out”



Example (5): Elisa and the affects of language brokering



Elisa: And the last time I did it it was like a first grade class. And there's like parents that don't speak English? And I'm able to like translate and interpret whatever the teacher says so that they could get, like, the message and get more involved in their students' education. Cause without— I feel like without me that wouldn't be possible. So I'm like really happy that I'm able to help these kids out cause you don't know what their future's gonna be like.

Zuleyma: You're making my heart sing. I'm so happy!



Valorizing affect in the classroom



- ▶ Elisa's explanation of her affective experience

I feel like without *me*,
that wouldn't be possible?

So I'm *really* happy that I can help these kids out,

- ▶ Instructors' creation of space for students' affective reflection in the classroom

Zuleyma: =You're making my heart sing.

Audrey: Aw::!

Elisa: Oh!

Students: <laughter>

Zuleyma: I'm so happy.



From affect to activism



4. Teaching and learning as a partnership with youth



- ▶ Partnership with a local community organization serving Mexican indigenous immigrant families
- ▶ The organization's youth group was already focused on issues of sociolinguistic justice
 - ▶ anti-bullying campaign
 - ▶ initiative to get Mixtec and Zapotec interpreters into local schools
- ▶ SKILLS gave students linguistic training to develop literacy materials in Mixtec and Zapotec varieties that didn't yet have writing systems



Example (6): Mixtec and Zapotec literacy poster

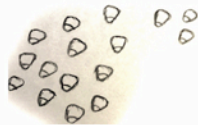


ORGULLO INDÍGENA



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yii (Z)
[ii:]

maíz
nùjní (M)
[núhni]
nchoop (Z)
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Zapoteco
Ndizhne' (Z)
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totopo
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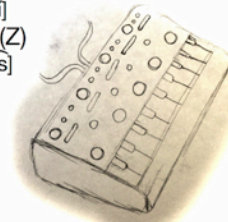


Mixteco
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SCHOOL KIDS INVESTIGATING
LANGUAGE IN LIFE • SOCIETY





Part 4

Concluding thoughts

Limitations and next steps in working for justice with youth



- ▶ The whiteness of the researcher
 - ▶ Racially and disciplinarily diverse research teams are crucial to this work
- ▶ Continuing to challenge the “school-as-usual” model and create more truly youth-led partnerships
 - ▶ One step in this direction: In the next phase of our work with indigenous immigrant youth, young people will develop and conduct a community language survey using their multilingual skills





Conclusion

- ▶ There is an urgent need for social-justice-oriented, youth-centered research on language and race in every racist city, state, and nation in the world
 - ▶ i.e., everywhere, although the U.S. situation is especially egregious
- ▶ Race, racism, and raciolinguistic ideologies must be at the center of research in applied linguistics



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Special thanks

- ▶ SKILLS Partner Sites, Partner Teachers, and Student Researcher-Activists
- ▶ SKILLS Co-Directors
- ▶ Graduate Teaching Fellows
- ▶ Undergraduate Mentors
- ▶ Field Researchers
- ▶ SKILLS Coordinators
- ▶ CCALC Interns

... past, present, and future!



Thank you!
Comments and questions?



- ▶ bucholtz@linguistics.ucsb.edu
- ▶ www.linguistics.ucsb.edu/faculty/bucholtz
 - ▶ Most of my publications can be downloaded by clicking the **Research** tab
 - ▶ Slides for this talk will be posted at the above URL
- ▶ For more information about SKILLS:
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