

Book Review / Compte rendu

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Interrogating Race and Racism in Postsecondary Language Classrooms by Xiangying Huo & Clayton Smith, 2024. IGI Global. 370 pages, ISBN13: 9781668490297, ISBN13 Softcover: 9781668490334; EISBN13: 9781668490303

In their book *Interrogating Race and Racism in Postsecondary Language Classrooms*, Xiangying Huo and Clayton Smith critically examine the intersections of race, language, and power across diverse higher education contexts. Grounded in Critical Race Theory, a framework that interrogates how race and racism are socially constructed, systemically embedded, and perpetuated through legal, institutional, and educational structures, the book brings together fourteen empirically grounded chapters that investigate how racism, colonial legacies, and linguistic ideologies shape teaching and learning in postsecondary language classrooms.

Drawing on diverse methodological approaches and global case studies, the contributors illuminate the lived experiences of racially minoritized students and teachers, including Latina, Vietnamese, Nigerian, Pakistani, and multilingual participants, across English and French language education in Canadian contexts. Beyond diagnosing structural and epistemological inequities, the volume advances anti racist,

decolonial, and linguistically just pedagogical frameworks. As such, the book makes a significant contribution to Applied Linguistics, language education, and higher education by positioning language classrooms as critical sites for advancing equity, social justice, institutional change, and pedagogical transformation.

Chapter one opens by contending that academic language standards are not neutral but reflect white and Eurocentric norms that systematically disadvantage multilingual and racialized students. Drawing on Critical Race Theory and raciolinguistics, the chapter shows how linguistic inequality is institutionally produced, providing a strong lens for understanding racism in postsecondary language classrooms. Chapter two uses narrative inquiry to examine the experiences of Latina bilingual preservice teachers. The chapter shows how linguistic racism affects students' learning confidence and professional choices. The term "linguistic terrorism" describes the fear and pressure students feel when their language is judged (Huo & Smith, 2023, p.

49). These stories show strong qualitative evidence that language discrimination is real and harmful. Similar research shows that language difference is often treated as a deficiency in academic spaces (Alim et al., 2016). In the next chapter, the authors use collaborative autoethnography to examine how internationally trained Vietnamese ESL teachers navigate barriers to professional integration in Ontario—including credential devaluation, limited access to licensure pathways, and unfamiliarity with local pedagogical norms. The chapter foregrounds issues of systemic discrimination, credential devaluation, and racialized assumptions that often position immigrant educators as deficient despite their extensive expertise. Through reflective narratives, the authors reveal how institutional barriers intersect with language ideology and cultural bias, ultimately constraining career mobility. Authors of Chapter four argue for structural reforms for racialized groups in hiring practices, credential recognition, and equity-oriented policies within educational institutions. The chapter emphasizes that meaningful inclusion requires not only policy change but also shifts in professional culture to value diverse pedagogical knowledge. Studies show that credential recognition in Canada lacks standardization, and even when immigrants' credentials are assessed, they are not always recognized or valued by employers, suggesting that policy reforms may not automatically translate into equitable outcomes (Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2005).

Section two of the book starts with chapter five, which examines how issues of race in English language teacher education are often discussed indirectly through topics such as immigration and identity. Liggett (2024) argues that in teacher education research, race is frequently overshadowed by language background or immigration experience. As a result, structural racial inequalities are not fully addressed. Drawing on social movement theory (Doug McAdam, 1982; Sidney Tarrow, 2011) and an intersectional approach (Kimberlé Crenshaw, 1989), the author proposes a framework for analyzing teacher identity that conceptualizes immigration not as a neutral process, but as a racialized social practice. The main contribution of this chapter is its call for teacher edu-

cation research to place race more explicitly at the center of analysis. However, the proposed framework remains largely conceptual, and further research is needed to examine how it can be applied in different national and institutional teacher education contexts. In chapter six, the authors pointed out that Advanced French programs often lead students and teachers to question their self-perceptions (Séror & Weinberg, 2021). Learners frequently experience a disconnect between classroom instruction and real-world language use, perceiving lessons as inadequate compared to authentic communication. For example, Nawa, a teacher candidate participant of the research, reports feeling “not good enough” when confronted with rigorous native speaker standards (Séror & Weinberg, 2021). Similarly, racialized teacher candidates encounter unfair stereotypes that associate professionalism with being White (Masson & Cote, 2024). In this chapter, the author argues that race is regarded as ‘absent-present’ in language teacher identity research, restricted by monoracial and native-speaker binaries. Daniel (2023) also argues that Whiteness is often left unnamed, even though it still shapes who is seen as legitimate and authoritative in world language education. Additionally, through a “Critical discourse analysis (CDA) of four empirical studies” (p. 117), Hebbard demonstrates how race is framed as fixed and singular. While the multiracial perspective powerfully challenges racial essentialism, the chapter remains largely theoretical, offering limited pedagogical strategies that could weaken its practical impact for teachers. In this chapter, the author argues that language mediates identity and covert racism in multiracial postsecondary classrooms using methodology and theory of raciolinguistics and intersectionality. According to Rosa and Flores (2017), language and race are shaped by wider relations of power, and dominant language ideologies often position racialised speakers as lacking linguistic legitimacy. Through research of 40 Nigerian graduate students, the data shows that discrimination is often subtle, emerging through code-switching, accent bias, and discriminatory discourse. The authors strongly believe that racism is mostly unconscious and embedded in everyday language practice. However, the argument would be more persua-

sive if it were supported by a larger-scale survey sample and complemented by the inclusion of concrete pedagogical strategies that address systemic challenges.

In the final section, chapter nine compares teaching that focuses on students' weaknesses in one language with teaching that values students' strengths and backgrounds to promote fairness in language learning (Anand, 2024; Chaudhuri & Stouck, 2024). While valuing student strengths advances linguistic justice, this study excludes Indigenous experiences due to community-specific funding requirements for graded instruction (Chaudhuri & Stouck, 2024). Chapter 10 demonstrates this through collaborative ethnography. Chang et al. (2024) question the assumption of objectivity in tutoring and point out that "writing center tutoring feedback contains some Eurocentric racial discourses that are complicated and coded as objective" (Chang et al., 2024, p. 218). This argument aligns with Milu's claim that "language difference is routinely racialized and framed as a deficiency within academic writing spaces" (Milu, 2021, p. 442). However, despite effectively exposing racialized language power relations, the chapter's exploration of transformative alternatives remains primarily at the conceptual level, lacking practical applicability at the institutional level. In chapter 11, the authors explore how first-year writing textbooks reproduce or challenge racial-linguistic inequalities in multilingual classrooms. They argue that dominant materials often normalize white academic English, stating that "multilingual students are positioned as problems to be fixed rather than knowledge producers" (Natarajan & Pez, 2024, p. 244). This viewpoint echoes Canagarajah's (2024) critique that "decolonizing writing pedagogy requires valuing multilingual practices as legitimate meaning-making resources" (2024, p. 285). Although this chapter provides a model of anti-racist textbooks grounded in critical pedagogy, it does not examine how teachers, who are subject to institutional evaluation mechanisms, can implement these methods on a large scale. Studies in Chapter 12 criticize monolingual norms in higher education and show that Standard English can limit multilingual students. Raciolinguistic and translanguaging research argues that students' home lan-

guages are learning resources, not problems. Research on language testing also shows that high-stakes English assessments can have real consequences and reduce students' opportunities (Wolf, 2022). Overall, the literature calls for changes in teaching, assessment, and university support to promote linguistic justice and value multilingualism. Chapter 13 illustrates previous studies showing that English-only education in Sindh and South Asia comes from a colonial history and often pushes local languages aside. Research on translanguaging argues that using more than one language helps protect students' language rights. Students feel more confident and understand lessons better when they can use mixed languages, while English-only policies may silence them and increase inequality. This suggests that language policy is about fairness, not only teaching methods (Ali et al., 2023; Sah & Kubota, 2022). The final chapter presents a systematized review of research on anti-racist pedagogical strategies in post-secondary language classrooms. Guided by Critical Race Theory, Holden and Smith (2024) examine existing studies to identify how epistemological racism, linguistic hierarchy, and the dominance of English continue to shape language education. The authors show that these structural conditions have ongoing effects on the learning experiences of multilingual students. The strength of this chapter lies in its synthesis of scattered literature, which offers a clear overview of key issues and directions for anti-racist language pedagogy. However, because the chapter is based primarily on previous research, it provides limited discussion of how these strategies can be implemented in everyday classroom practice under institutional constraints.

To conclude, this book offers both a rigorous analytical lens and a compelling call to action for educators, researchers, and policymakers. While future work could further strengthen its impact through expanded empirical scope and more detailed pedagogical implementation strategies, the book nonetheless provides a timely and necessary intervention in ongoing conversations about equity in language education. It will be of particular value to those seeking to critically engage with and transform postsecondary language teaching practices in increa-

singly diverse and globalized contexts.

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