

RESEÑA

**Heller, Monica and Bonnie McElhinny. (2017).  
Language, Capitalism, Colonialism: Towards a  
Critical History. North York, Ontario, Canada:  
University of Toronto Press.**

**Rosa, Jonathan. (2019). Looking Like a Language,  
Sounding Like a Race: Raciolinguistic Ideologies  
and the Learning of Latinidad. New York: Oxford  
University Press.**

RESEÑADO POR

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“Shifting how we think about language and how we use it  
necessarily alterns how we know what we know”  
(hooks, 1994, p. 226).

**Introduction**

In this book review essay, I will offer a complementary dialogue between Jonathan Rosa’s *Looking like a Language, Sounding like a Race* (2019) and *Language, Capitalism, Colonialism* (2017) by Monica Heller and Bonnie McElhinny. Both publications are inscribed in a crucial moment for the linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics disciplines, which are incorporating critical approaches in order to rethink, modify, extend or contest traditional linguistic categories, most of them assumed to be “natural” in contemporary linguistic analysis. In this context, *Looking like a Language, Sounding like a Race* and *Language, Capitalism, Colonialism* are timely additions to a series of publications regarding language ideologies (Gal & Irvine, 1995; Kroskrity,

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2000; Rosa & Brudick, 2017; Woolard, 1998), racialization processes (Alim, Rickford and Ball, 2016; Avineri et al., 2015; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Flores & García, 2017; Reyes, 2017; Rosa & Flores, 2017) and disinventing tactics (Makoni & Pennycook, 2005).

Both studies propose a shift from paying attention to the productions of the *speaking subject* to the perceptions of the *listening subject* in accounts of linguistic production (Inoue, 2003). The socioculturally constructed and historically emergent modern practice of hearing the language of Others is a key feature in the reflection developed by Rosa and Heller & McElhinny: on the one hand, Rosa's book tries to explain how a language is socially constructed as emblematic of particular racial categories in the United States and vice versa. On the other, Heller & McElhinny offer an account of how hegemonic ideas (or perceptions) about language play a central role in the making of social difference and inequality. Moreover, both texts also put forward projects for *centering* the listening subject in order to *rethink* and, hopefully, contest cultural hegemony (Gramsci). For example, in Rosa's book the reader will observe different semiotic processes through which Latinx racialized bodies reroute marginalization in their everyday life. Meanwhile, in Heller & McElhinny's approach, the reader will understand "when, how, and where projects to challenge inequity have been delimited, or interrupted by prevailing ideologies" of capitalism and colonialism (p. xvi).

After a general overview of both texts, I will present a complementary reading where *Language, Capitalism, Colonialism* (2017) provides the necessary historical background for *Looking like a language, Sounding like a race* (2019). Some of the themes highlighted in this "book encounter" deal with the historical co-naturalization of categories such as race and language, as well as how those ideas on race and language reach into the very core of individuals. Of particular relevance here is how Rosa's book puts forward a semiotic conceptualization of race, rendering it an embodied and recognizable social sign. However, because ethnographies are only a snapshot of relatively limited spatial and temporal scope some limitations will be considered in the last section. Finally, I would like to reflect on what these books and, specifically, their critical reflections mean for the future of the linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics fields. In doing so, I will recall the notions of radical hope (Heller & McElhinny) and imagined futures (Rosa), a particular *chronotope* that echoes in both readings leading us from disinventing the past into inventing new futures. As the authors express, that future is not something that we need to reach but it is now among us. A way to recognize it is by shifting our perspectives and practices regarding language.

## Book overviews

### *Language, Capitalism, Colonialism* by Monica Heller and Bonnie McElhinny

The main goal of Heller & McElhinny (2017) is to offer “an account of how ideas about language play a central role in the making of social difference and social inequality” (p. 2). The book looks to explain the prevailing political and economic conditions of colonialism and capitalism in which hegemonic ideas about language emerged and circulated by paying close attention to key figures in the field of (socio) linguistics and linguistic anthropology. Building on an historical approach characterized as “walking backward into the future”, the book attempts to explain “when, how, and where projects to challenge inequity have been delimited, or interrupted, by prevailing ideologies” of what a language is (p. xvi). The projects that contest this hegemony are seen here as alternative perspectives or imagined futures.

In the introductory chapter, the authors build on concepts from Raymond Williams such as *keywords* and *language ideologies*, and Gramsci’s notion of *cultural hegemony*. They also integrate approaches such as Sylvia Wynter’s “colonized perspectives” as well as the philosophy of the Anishinaabe people of the Great Lakes. Through this indigenous perspective, the authors situate us in a long story of movement and migration, in what has been described as a seven-fire prophecy: our task, say the authors in the book’s opening statement, is “to find [in the past] the tools that allow us to walk into the future” (p. 15); the book ends with some insights on how to move forward to the lighting eighth fire, which is described as “an everlasting fire of peace” (p. 15). To reach it, we need to find tools for *inventing* and to forge *reciprocal relations*, with new narratives, new narrators, and new ways of telling stories (p. 259).

The book is organized in a point/counterpoint relation among chapters in the contexts of mercantile capitalism (Part I), national and colonial industrial capitalism (Part II), and the Cold War welfare state (Part III). Even though there is a clear chronological order, the authors are constantly recalling genealogical connections among chapters, actors and topics. In part I, *Language, Intimacy and Empire*, the authors turn to the question of how Europe and the United States were engaged in making colonial subjects and legitimizing their empire. In chapter two, they explain how language was conceived in two imperial moments (or colonial encounters) shaped by mercantile capitalism and the heyday of formal imperialism: the Spanish colonial project of the New World and the British conquest of India. The two cases discussed here are the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Spanish missionary linguists tasked with the dissemination of Christian beliefs, and the race of comparative philology in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>-century India and Britain. Chapter three explores three challenges to comparative philology made by anthropologists and linguists during the 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in the context of the rise of industrial capitalism and the emergence of liberal demo-

cracy: the evolutionary theory, the starting studies of pidgins and creoles, and critiques of racism and evolutionary accounts made by Franz Boas (1858-1942), recognized today as the father of the American anthropological tradition. Throughout this chapter, discussions about culture, social progress, struggle and race hierarchy focus on language structure; morphology, in particular, emerges as a key site for assessing linguistic hierarchy. In the second part, *The contradictions of Language in Industrial Capitalism*, the authors turn to how Europe constructed itself during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Chapter four explains the emergence of the nation-state as the hegemonic form of the organization of political, economic, social and cultural life in 19th-century Europe, paying attention to how the emergence of the idea of “nations” was tied to the development of industrial capitalism, the rise of the bourgeoisie and the liberal democratic project of the French Revolution. Moreover, they examine how the making of a unified national language through the standardization process was a way of drawing national borders and constructing differential citizenship. In this chapter, the authors also trace how the political economy of the liberal democratic, industrial nation-state was tied to a particular idea of science that propelled the development of linguistics as a scientific field. Chapter five explores sequels to modernist nationalism, focusing on challenges against its insistence on bounded difference, such as internationalism and the elaboration of international auxiliary languages like Esperanto, and those that took its logic to an extreme, such as European fascism and Nazism. Another challenge accounted for in here is the search for a science of language in the making of the USSR and international communism.

Part III, *Brave New Worlds: Language as Technology, Language as Technique*, the authors turn to the effects of World War II and the Cold War, and the explicit battle between capitalist and communist ideologies. Chapter six focuses largely on the United States in the late 40s and 50s, paying attention to the elaboration of universalist understandings of language syntax by structuralists and generativists as a response to the radical racist relativism of fascism. In the search for human universals, generative grammar disaggregated language from society, depoliticizing linguistic study. Cold War conditions in the United States suppressed critical thinking in academia regarding capitalism and its inequities, turning language into a technical tool useful for security and intelligence purposes. As a counterpoint of the previous section, chapter seven explains the emergence of the field of sociolinguistics in the United States, which had consolidated as the new seat of global capitalist power, as well as the institutionalization of sociolinguistics in Europe. In the 60s and early 70s, in the context of development and decolonization projects propelled by private foundations, scholars worked to challenge universalist ideas by giving more attention to social inequalities visible in the linguistic practices and linked to culture, race, class and gender. The last chapter is contrapuntal within itself, describing the capitalist and colonial discourses

of the moment, as well as the challenges to these. The chapter tracks the period from the 80s until today, marked by the end of the Cold War and the heyday of late capitalism. In particular, the authors explore how language value (as a skill, commodity or authenticity) is tied to changing understandings of space, time, and humanity. Also, they trace some of the challenges to commodification of language like eco-linguistics as well as other strategies to repair the colonial harm such as speech acts of redress, refusal and reclamation.

***Looking like a language, Sounding like a race* by Jonathan Rosa**

Rosa's book is an alternative urban ethnography conducted in New Northwest High School (NNHS), an open enrollment Chicago public school mostly attended by Puerto Rican and Mexican students, and its surrounding communities, during 2007 and 2010. In this ethnography, Rosa offers an account of the semiotic processes involved in the Latinx racial category-making and embodiment associated to a *perceived* repertoire of varieties of English and Spanish (p. 7, emphasis added). One of the books' main arguments is to recognize and denaturalize the processes of racial and linguistic co-naturalization anchored in racial capitalism that, in his opinion, powerfully shapes everyday life across social contexts and institutional scales in the United States. Embracing a *raciolinguistic* perspective, Rosa attempts to observe how race is socially constructed through language, but also the ways language is socially constructed through race. Building on the concept of *enregisterment* (Agha, 2003), Rosa coins the concept of *raciolinguistic enregisterment* to better understand "how and why particular linguistic forms are constructed as emblematic of particular racial categories, and vice versa" (p. 7). Moreover, thinking through the semiotics notions of *the listening subject* (Inoue, 2003) and *indexical inversion*, Rosa argues that "Latinx linguistic practices are construed from the perspective of hegemonically positioned White perceiving subjects" in the United States (p. 6). However, the ethnography also opens up an alternative space to understand the everyday practices through which Latinx subjects/communities/students? creatively contest, reimagine, and redefine ethnoracial, geopolitical and linguistic borders (p. 8). Therefore, the raciolinguistic perspective does not just embrace a decolonization project to dismantle hegemonically positioned subjects' modes of perception, but also attempts to demonstrate "that worlds beyond these borders [ethnoracial, geopolitical and linguistic] are not just possible, but in fact already in existence and waiting to be recognized as such" (p. 213).

Following Inoue's distinction between the social practice of *seeing* and *hearing* (2003, p. 157), Rosa's book is divided in two parts: "*Looking like a language*" and "*Sounding like a race*". Each chapter is inscribed in what Rosa calls "in and out group membership perspective", which highlights the permanent negotiation among students, administrators and professors regarding the (self)making of Latinx identity in NNHS.

Additionally, the ethnography locates the category-making negotiation as embedded in the projected tensions between discourses of assimilation and multiculturalism anchored at the very basis of liberal democracy in the United States. The first part of the book is primarily focused on how Latinidad comes to be institutionally *constructed*, *contorted*, and *embodied* in relation to intersectional experiences of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class. In chapter one, Rosa presents the school principal's project of transformation and recognition of Latinx students, from 'gangbanger' or 'hoes' into 'Young Latino Professionals', an identity category that the author characterizes as an intersectional mobility project. This project, which resulted in uniform and antitracking policies inside NNHS, sought to combine upward socioeconomic mobility with the preservation of the students' ethnoracial and cultural identity. The analysis does not just reveal the contradictions that teachers and administrators face while simultaneously validating and transforming students' modes of self-making, but also demonstrates the project's limited ability to secure unproblematic recognitions of students as Young Latino Professionals. From the opposite perspective, chapter two focuses on the students' axis of differentiation within NNHS, such as "Mexican" and "Puerto Rican". In this section, Rosa seeks to demonstrate how the erasure of Mexican-Puerto Rican difference within the school's project of creating Young Latino Professionals paradoxically (re)produces rigid discourses of distinctions between self-identified Puerto Rican and Mexican students. Highlighting the co-constitutive relationship between race and ethnicity, Rosa describes the *ethnoracial contortions* that characterize students' twisted and turned modes of self-identification with respect to constructed tensions between ethnoracial authenticity and assimilation. In chapter three, Rosa traces what he calls *repertoires of Latinidad*, or Mexican and Puerto Rican models of personhood, that emerge as the product of semiotic operations that connect the circulation of Latinx things (material objects, practices, and language) to the embodiment and enactment of Latinx people. *Spanishness*, in this context, is a particularly powerful emblem of Latinx identity, as shown in the second part of the book, where Rosa explores the role that language ideologies and linguistic practices play in the creation of Latinx identities.

In chapter four, Rosa describes the racialized relationship between ideologies of language standardization and "languagelessness" which frames US Latinxs as illegitimate users of both standard Spanish and standard English. Particularly relevant in this chapter is the inverted conceptualization of bilingualism that the school principal expressed, which is measured only in relation to the students' imputed limited English proficiency. In Rosa's opinion, this particular inversion in NNHS was coherent with state and federal policies that frame bilingualism as an impediment for racially minoritized students. As a way to escape linguistic stigmatization, in chapter five the author presents what he calls Inverted Spanglish, a linguistic practice through which

US Latinx find a way to produce Spanish *in* English without being perceived as having an accent (e.g. ‘cone pairmesso’, *con permiso*, ‘pour fuhvor’, *por favor*). Rosa argues that Latinx appropriate Mock Spanish (Cf. Hill, 1998) to signal their intimate knowledge of English and Spanish and reroute the stigmatization they faced when speaking each language as a separate code. From the students’ perspective, Inverted Spanglish is a both form of solidarity among them as well as a satirical response to the Young Latino Professional project. Finally, chapter six explores the ways in which Latinx youth draw on intertextual literacy practices that Rosa coins as “outlaw(ed) literacies” to navigate and respond to experiences of stigmatization and marginalization within NNHS and its surrounding communities. Through this literacy practices students signal their “school kids” and “street kids” affiliations concurrently, again calling into question the principal’s project of transforming students into Young Latino Professionals.

### **Book encounter**

One of the most relevant arguments in Rosa’s book is the co-naturalization of race and language as a key feature of modern governance. Through a *raciolinguistic* perspective he is not just attempting to denaturalize the ideological processes involved in that construction. Instead, he is also advancing a semiotic conceptualization of race and language as social signs that differentiates his work from many sociolinguistic studies that, to date, have attempted to document racialized linguistic practices. Although Rosa’s interest is to explain how bodies and linguistic practices are perceived, parsed, and experienced in everyday interactions and modes of identification, he argues that “we must attend to the historical and institutional conditions of possibility for such intersubjective phenomena in order to understand how they reproduce, disrupt, and reconfigure racial categories and linguistic varieties” (p. 4).

From Rosa’s perspective, race and language are not objectively observable or embodied phenomena but instead colonial-conditioned constructions of reality. If Rosa’s book makes us aware of the existence of these particular processes of naturalization that rearticulate colonial distinctions between normative Europeaness and Othered non-Europeaness in the United States, Heller & McElhinny’s text show us where these naturalized racial models came from. In chapter three, the authors trace the emergence of the evolutionary theory (ET) and the idea of language as race as a critique to comparative philology in the context of the rise of industrial capitalism and the emergence of liberal democracy. This theory privileged immutable biological and genetic differences over and against notions of similarity to rank groups of people in an evolutionary spectrum from primitive to civilized races. Building on Darwin’s ideas about human evolution and “struggle” for survival (closely connected to the idea of struggle in capitalism), ET sought to show how language, culture, and race *together* could allow for the description of stages of human evolution. In this con-

text, ideologies of race and racism inscribed in teleological hierarchies of progress, and legitimized through ideas about language and culture, rationalized European and North American imperialism. Moreover, the idea of the struggle for raw materials and labor held that groups not able to successfully repel imperial occupation were racially inferior, linking capitalism struggle to notions of social progress. Lastly, in this period also emerged *eugenics* ideologies and anxieties about interracial procreation and race degeneracy that could threaten European domination. Rosa's critique to the spectrum-based racial logics that, in his opinion, "tell us very little about how populations come to be positioned in particular historical, political, and economic circumstances" (p. 3), are traceable from this historical period.

Regarding the co-naturalization of language and race, Rosa also examines how perceptions of Latinx difference are managed in everyday interactions through the negotiation between assimilation and multiculturalism in the context of liberal democracy in the United States. The tension between both discourses is traceable from Heller & McElhinny's explanation of the emergence of the modern nation-state in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Europe (chapter four), and rests in the naturalization of the idea that nations are organic bodies bound by a shared history, territory, culture, race and language. Building on Elizabeth A. Povinelli's work, Rosa argues that liberal multiculturalism is the product of a liberal democratic governance, which requires racialized subjects to perform an authentic difference in exchange for the good feelings of the nation (p. 13). In Rosa's opinion: "For US. Latinxs, this performance of difference produces a double-bind that requires them to signal their difference constantly without ever overstepping the shifting boundaries of what constitutes tolerable difference in a given context" (p. 13).

Building on these previous accounts, which constitute a relevant historical background to understand his critical conceptualization of race and language, Rosa advances the concept of *raciolinguistic enregisterment*. Through this notion, he examines how the semiotic processes of race and language were rendered mutually *perceivable*: that is, how Latinx individuals come to look like a language and sound like a race. In doing so, Rosa is mapping race not into biology, as the evolutionary theory and later the *deficit hypothesis* did (Heller & McElhinny, 2017, p. 206), but into language, "such that language practices and racial categories become iconic of one another" (p. 8). Through this approach, Rosa takes distance from the *difference hypothesis* associated to the major figures in American sociolinguistics (such as William Labov) who attempted to document a variable range of distinctive linguistic practices of a given, objectified racial group (Heller & McElhinny, 2017, p. 207).

In this context, Rosa's approach through enregisterment "involves asking how and why particular linguistic forms [material objects and practices] are constructed as emblematic of particular racial categories, and vice versa" (p. 7). Moreover, in order

to observe how language becomes an embodied emblem (or sign) of Latinidad, it is crucial to adopt an intersectional approach to analyze related categories of difference such as class, gender, sexuality, etc., and their role in shaping perceptions of language use. Rosa's intersectional approach constitutes a challenge (again) to the separation of language, race, and culture proposed by Franz Boas, who at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was disaggregating those categories in order to challenge the ET (Heller & McElhinny 2017, pp. 77-84). As Heller & McElhinny argue, today "we need to pay attention to language as embodiment, and in particular to how embodiment is about racialization" (p. 255).

Rosa states that Latinx identity should be "understood as a semiotic phenomenon that is structured by the creation and circulation of emblems of ethnoracial difference that render Latinidad perceivable and recognizable" (p. 106). In his ethnography, signs of Mexicanness and Puerto Ricanness index particular models of personhood that organized students' identifications of themselves (Latinx subgroups) and others (non-Latinx). The particular semiotic operation that Rosa works is *qualia* by which "linguistic forms seems to partake of abstract qualities associated with sense modalities..." and conversely, "abstract properties that are said to characterize forms of speech are seen as typical attributes of objects and experiences in other media" (Gal, 2013, p. 32). In this sense, hairstyles, clothing, language, food, dance and music are emblems, embodiments and experiences that constitute "the fact of Latinidad" (p. 103). As the reader will notice while reading Rosa's book (and this book review), enregisterment of linguistic varieties and racial categories can become *iconic* or can be *contested*.

While Heller & McElhinny's critical historical account highlights the prevailing political and economic conditions in which the ideas about race and language that Rosa's book is critically rethinking emerged, through the latter we can also observe the social effects that the ideas traced in the former have in people's lives. We may now turn to how naturalized ideas about language and race reach into the very core of individuals, using as examples the experiences of the racialized ideology of languagelessness (chapter 4) and the practices of Inverted Spanglish (chapter 5) analyzed by Rosa in his interactions with NNHS students. Even though the identity project of the Young Latino Professional mobilized by the school principal (Dr. Baez) was not explicitly pointing to language as a specific asset to transform the recognition of Latinx students as 'gangbangers' or 'hoes' outside the school (chapter one), Dr. Baez expressed in some occasion that if her students were to be recognized as Young Latino Professionals they needed to learn English as quickly as possible. In one occasion, when Rosa was interviewing Dr. Baez about the English Language Learners (ELL) situation inside the classrooms in NNHS, she expressed her understanding of "bilingualism": "They are bilingual. That means they do not know the language" (p.

128). This makes visible the assimilationist approach of her identity project and her alignment to English-only language policy. In his fieldwork in NNHS, Rosa observed that the majority of students in any classroom engaged in English and Spanish linguistic practices regularly, therefore, from his point of view, the students were almost all bilingual. However, Dr. Baez only considered bilingual those students designated as ELL, equating bilingualism with limited English proficiency and devaluing students' Spanish language abilities in academic contexts. This is a case of *linguicism* ("linguistically argued racism"), a specific racialized *iconic* relationship between the signs of language and race. Rosa's arguments are revealing at this point:

Whereas claims about biological inferiority are no longer acceptable in mainstream US public discourse, claims about linguistic inferiority are often perceived as perfectly legitimate. Latinxs' simultaneous positioning in relation to English and Spanish is a crucial component of the remapping of race from biology onto language in the context of NNHS. This remapping is articulated through a racialized ideology of languagelessness that subjects Latinxs to the experience of double-stigmatization in relation to their perceived illegitimate use of English and Spanish (p. 139).

The previous situation is visible in the case of Yesi, one of the highest achieving students at NNHS that went on to attend a highly selective liberal arts college in which she was recruited to enact Latina authenticity. In her freshman year, Yesi enrolled in an intermediate Spanish composition and conversation course. She worked very hard in the assignments but at the end of the semester she received a D grade. Because of her racialized body, Yesi was not perceived by her professor as producing spoken or written standard Spanish forms required in the course. In other words, she was perceived by the (White) listening subject as unable to produce standard Spanish, a situation that made her feel and think she did not know Spanish at all. No matter how many efforts she made in the Spanish class, she would not be able to produce her own language. This form of stigmatization was also present in her use of English. Many of her professors asked her if English was her native language when commenting her papers (p. 141). Even though the college supposedly valued her linguistic "diversity", she was stigmatized by her use of both Spanish and English.

On the contrary, to be recognized as Young Latino Professionals and not as ELL in NNHS, the Latinx students should be perceived by the (White) listening subject as speaking "unaccented" English. These institutional constraints led Latinx students to find ways to produce Spanish *in* English without being perceived as having an accent. One of these ways is the production of *Inverted Spanglish*, a particular register through which Spanish lexical items are pronounced with English phonology. For example, when read aloud, the phrase in English "pink cheese, green ghosts, cool arrows" (p. 162) sounds like the Spanish "pinches gringos culeros" ("fucking Ameri-

can (or White) assholes”). When Rosa interviewed Mayra, the student who had registered this phrase in her notebook, she stated that “she and her friends loved to trick their favorite White, monolingual English using teachers into reading this aloud in front of the class” (p. 162), since the teachers were unable to recognize that these written English forms corresponded to Spanish words when spoken.

In Rosa’s opinion, *Inverted Spanglish* allowed Latinx students to avoid the stigmatization they faced when speaking “English” or “Spanish” as separate codes (like in Yesi’s case), create solidarity among Latinx students, and contest the iconic relationship between Latinx identity and the Spanish language (p. 149). In his analysis, Rosa demonstrates that NNHS students had a shared investment in their ability to speak “unaccented” English as well as intimate familiarity with Puerto Rican and Mexican Spanish varieties. By navigating the institutional project of Young Latino Professional that attempted to balance assimilation and cultural identity, the students had the task of signaling their Latinx identities “by always sounding like they could speak Spanish *in* English, but never letting too much Spanish seep into their English” (p. 160). The register of Inverted Spanglish parodies speech associated with professionals and represents the students’ satirical response to Dr. Baez’s project by making visible its contradictions (p. 168).

### **Final remarks**

As I have tried to show in this book review essay, the authors of these texts propose to historically rethink co-naturalized categories such as language and race in order to *center* the listening subject and denaturalize its hegemonic perceptions that reproduce social difference and inequality in the context of (racial) capitalism. As the reader will gather from reading both texts, our main understanding of language and race comes from the perspectives of male, Western and White, intellectual listening subjects. In both books different projects and linguistic practices produced by the “colonized” constitute counter-hegemonies that the authors analyze in order to better grasp how individuals use language to challenge capitalist and colonial logics. Nevertheless, the authors also examine colonized practices that do not counter a hegemonic formation but support if not outright drive it.

However, two critiques can be posed at this point. Because ethnographies are not neutral fragments of reality, some groups of speakers always remain outside. On the one hand, Rosa’s urban ethnography in NNHS tends to isolate Latinx groups from other non-Latinx ethnoracial diversity in the city. A further study should observe the potential effects in the processes of raciolinguistic enregisterment among Latinx communities in relationship with other non-Latinx groups in Chicago. On the other hand, Heller & McElhinny do not trace language ideologies and contesting projects regarding language standardization coming from South America in the Independen-

ce period of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a political process profoundly influenced by the ideas of the French Revolution. These ideologies, for instance, can explain the colonial salience of specific Spanish linguistic features enregistered as “correct” or “proper” by the Puerto Rican and Mexican students in NNHS (chapter 3). Even though the latter do not alter Heller & McElhinny’s argument, the South American chapter would open up a space for a linguistic periphery not accounted for in the book.

At this point we have observed how language can be used to build, sustain and challenge capitalist and colonial logics. Nevertheless, by a reconceptualization of language we may also imagine different futures. As the quote by bell hooks at the beginning of this essay shows, by shifting the way we think about language (and race) it would be possible to produce knowledge in a different manner, repair past harms and move towards more equitable and peaceful futures. Likewise, Heller & McElhinny state in their book that from now on, “the approaches we take will shape the future” (p. 22), and Rosa does this by proposing a *raciolinguistic* approach to study racialized populations and their linguistic practices in the United States.

Moreover, both books activate a particular *chronotope* to conceptualize different futures: by disinventing the past, it would be possible to imagine (or invent) different futures from the present. In order to imagine new futures, Rosa proposes that it is necessary to reimagine the borders of naturalized categories that do not let us see worlds already in existence beyond those borders. Similarly, Heller & McElhinny embrace the notion of *radical hope* from the Dominican writer Junot Díaz to argue that the imagined futures are not just in the way we approach categories and modes of perception but also in practice: “Radical hope is not so much something you have but *something you practice...*” (p. xiv, emphasis added). The imagined futures should be recognized through both new approaches and new practices. Rosa’s book argues for the *raciolinguistic* perspective in linguistic anthropology following Heller & McElhinny’s book previous prompt. In the same path, Rosa argues for new practices in the production of knowledge within the discipline of linguistic anthropology, which he conceptualizes as a potential critical site of community collaboration and as a contributor to justice efforts (p. xiv). By pushing this project, that includes “challenging the distinction between expert and lay analysis” (Heller & McElhinny, 2017, p. 8), new ideas about the appropriate sites and forms of knowledge production must be considered in linguistic anthropology in order to enact the decolonial project. That is *the* challenge for the discipline today.

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