ANOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ALIM, H. SAMY, ET AL. RACIOLINGUISTICS : HOW LANGUAGE SHAPES OUR IDEAS ABOUT RACE. OXFORD ; NEW YORK, OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2016.

This edited collection theorizes “raciolinguistics” as the study of how language and race are inextricable from each other—meaning, language practices are shaped by racial hierarchies and constructs, as well as how race and its politics can also be questioned, re-drawn, and re-negotiated by language practices. A crucial source for studying the intersections of language and race, linguistic racism, and challenging racist practices through language.


Bou Ayash observes that representational symbols, archetypes, and images we use to describe language are part of powerful habitus that we inhabit. In moving toward translingualism, it’s crucial to examine how and where monolingualism still shows up in language representations that we have.


Canagarajah recounts the history of monolingualism, by which he means English-only-style attitudes toward language, and the responses from scholars in TESOL and composition. He critiques existing approaches to language, claiming that they do not sufficiently account for the overlapping and boundaryless nature of language. The term “translingualism,” he says, adequately accounts for movement across and between codes,. In the latter half of his book, Canagarajah offers pedagogical examples with a particular focus on assessing translingual work.

With a focus on teacher training, Canagarajah addresses a lack of composition teacher development in helping teacher implement the rapidly changing theories, such as a translingual orientation to writing. Through talking about the principles, design, and evaluation of his graduate course “Teaching of Second Language Writing”, he demonstrates how teacher-training programs can provide support for composition teachers to keep up with advancements in the field.

Gilyard is wary about how language difference is treated in the current theoretical framework of translingualism. While he acknowledges that it’s good to recognize language difference as the norm, Gilyard’s main crucial warning is not to flatten language differences as seemingly the same kind.

Education scholars Flores and Rosa claim that race and language are inherently interrelated and that people of color are perceived as racialized regardless of their linguistic practices. They argue against monolingual, English-only approaches that privilege “Standard American English” on the grounds that prestige languages and dialects are presented as objective but are, in fact, exclusionary and racialized. They also point out that hybrid language practices (like translingualism) are perceived differently depending on a person’s identity, but instead of asking the speaker to change, they call for a change in the white listener.

This article, grown out of a symposium at the University of Louisville, proposes a new approach towards difference in language, treating it as a resource for the development of writing, speaking, reading, and listening, as opposed to treating it as a barrier assumed by a monolingual approach. This article is a cornerstone piece that started the whole heated discussion of translingualism, together with its possible implications for theory development and teacher training in composition and other fields.

Lee asks whether translingualism actually promotes social justice and calls for teachers to commit themselves to “linguistic social justice” when teaching translingualism. Specifically, he notes that if instructors privilege overtly translingual writing above monolingual writing, they run the risk of engaging in “linguistic tourism”—tokenizing translingual students on the basis of their presumably-unique language practices (Matsuda qtd. in Won Lee, 180). Lee offers suggestions for approaching translingual pedagogy through a critical lens.

In her study of migrant women writers who are multilingually competent, Leonard observes that these writers have something called “rhetorical attunement” which can be understood as a sensibility or receptive disposition developed over time toward language difference as an opportunity for learning and negotiation.

Lu and Horner argue that translingualism should not be defined as deviance from the “norm.” Using student examples, they show how writing that appears standard is actually a manifestation of the student’s agency to create new meaning. Translingualism is, for Lu and Horner, more about process than product.


A handy edited collection that traces the histories of composition as a field, theoretical development in composition studies, and some special topics in the field. Many, if not all articles in this book are written by “big name” scholars who played a key role in shaping composition as a field. It is a useful book to have on your shelf when you need quick reference on particular composition theories or want to have a comprehensive read as someone relatively new in the field. Your friends and Language and Rhetoric almost certainly have a copy that you can borrow. Part IV (“Worldwide Projects”) is particularly relevant to translingualism.


Using narrative inquiry and practitioner inquiry, this article provides narrativized and carefully reflected examples from three language-teaching educators and scholars. The authors argue that the identities of teachers with “translinguistic histories, or “multilingual and globally situated identities” should be examined through a critical lens and deployed as advantages of teaching, instead of being perceived as the pitfall of those teachers.