

## **Jorge Alvis**

Glottopolitics, Translanguaging, and Raciolinguistics. Three critical approaches to Spanish in and from the United States

### **Abstract**

The purpose of this essay is to introduce three critical sociolinguistic approaches to Spanish in the US: Glottopolitics, Translanguaging, and Raciolinguistics, as well as their conceptual and institutional relationships. By looking into recent scholarship, the paper examines their grounding in postmodern theory and how they stand apart from variationist sociolinguistics. The paper also shows how they deal with the political condition of language in relation to issues of language policy, language education, and language racialization. Lastly, it offers a brief discussion of the scope of their findings beyond the US.

### **Resumen**

El objetivo de este ensayo es presentar tres enfoques sociolingüísticos críticos del español en los Estados Unidos, denominados Glotopolítica, Translanguaging y Raciolingüística, así como sus relaciones conceptuales e institucionales. A través de un análisis de obras recientes, el artículo examina cómo sus planteamientos se benefician de la teoría crítica posmoderna y se diferencian de enfoques tales como el de la sociolingüística variacionista. Se muestra aquí también cómo cada uno de ellos da cuenta de la condición política del lenguaje en relación con cuestiones de política lingüística, educación lingüística y racialización lingüística. Por último, se ofrece un breve debate sobre el alcance de sus planteamientos más allá de los Estados Unidos, con un enfoque Latinoamericano.

### **Keywords**

Spanish in the US – Glottopolitics – Translanguaging – Raciolinguistics – Critical Theory

### **Palabras clave**

Español en los Estados Unidos – Glotopolítica – Translanguaging – Raciolingüística – Teoría Crítica

**Référence électronique** : Jorge Alvis, « Glottopolitics, Translanguaging, and Raciolinguistics. Three critical approaches to Spanish in and from the United States », © 2021 *Quaderna* [en ligne], 5 | 2021, mis en ligne le 12 avril 2021, url permanente : <https://quaderna.org/?p=947> .

Tous droits réservés

## **Glottopolitics, Translanguaging, and Raciolinguistics. Three critical approaches to Spanish in and from the United States**

Jorge Alvis, The Graduate Center | City University of New York

### **Introduction**

The Spanish language inhabits a paradoxical condition in the US. Despite being the language of a fourth of the national population (with roughly 60 million speakers)<sup>1</sup>, it is dismissed as the language of a minority and racialized group<sup>2</sup>. But at the same time, beyond and surrounding the US mainland, this romance language is the dominant means of communication of 20 sovereign states on both sides of the Atlantic – the inheritance of centuries of colonial ruling and exploitation, not to forget. This double status, minoritized within the US while hegemonic abroad, has allowed the emergence of a scholarship in sociolinguistics in the US that seeks to critically analyze the role of Spanish in education, media and public policy, among other key sites where representations and decisions about languages and speakers are made today.

Here I discuss three perspectives – Translanguaging, Glottopolitics, and Raciolinguistics – which have been in circulation in the social studies of language, with a focus on the Spanish speaking population. As I argue, these concepts follow a trend of development in Critical Sociolinguistics and Linguistic Anthropology inspired in postmodern theory around power and language as a social practice. They also stem from their authors’ lived experiences as Hispanics (or Latinxs) in the US as well as from their trajectories in the US public education system. It is important to point out that these concepts share an institutional link, as they can be traced to doctoral research in language education and cultural studies undertaken at The City University of New York Graduate School and University Center (The Graduate Center), a

---

<sup>1</sup> The Pew Research Center originally used the label “Hispanic” for the population of Latin-American origin, while keeping “Spaniards” for people from the Iberian Peninsula in some data sets. They also incorporated the label “Latinx” in their surveys. To the question “Who is Hispanic”, they favor the position of self-identification: “Anyone who says they are. And nobody who says they aren’t.” See, Mark Hugo Lopez, Jens Manuel Krogstad and Jeffrey S. Passel, “Who is Hispanic?”, PEW Research Center, September 15, 2020. Available at: <https://pewrsr.ch/30aKcQF>. According to recent data, the population of Hispanics reached 60.9 million in 2019 (18% of the overall US population). In regard to language, data shows that English proficiency has increased, while Spanish at home is in decline. See, Jens Manuel Krogstad and Luis Noe-Bustamante, “Key facts about U.S. Latinos for National Hispanic Heritage Month”, Pew Research Center, September 10, 2020. <https://pewrsr.ch/3emJJTR/>

<sup>2</sup> Bonnie Urcioli, *Exposing Prejudice: Puerto Rican Experiences of Language, Race, and Class*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1996.

hub of cutting edge public doctoral education on the US East Coast with a fair number of Latinx students<sup>3</sup>.

Despite the institutional link, so far no one has tried to elaborate on their conceptual connections, nor is there work that offers insight into them as a whole. It is my intention to start filling the gap with this descriptive essay in which I show how they engage in a scholarly conversation around the Spanish-speaking communities in the US.

To do so, in the rest of this work, I will first introduce Translanguaging, Glottopolitics, and Raciolinguistics emphasizing how they benefited from postmodern ideas about language as a social practice. I will also discuss the main concepts and debates as well as current research interests around these three terms. Such a revision will, hopefully, depict with new light the sociolinguistic complexities of the Spanish-speaking population in the US. Lastly, I will briefly discuss the scope of these concepts beyond the US, with a focus on Latin-American work in sociolinguistics.

### **Postmodern ideas about language**

Throughout the twentieth century, sociolinguistics advanced the study of language and society based on Saussurean distinctions, namely on a structural theory of language<sup>4</sup>. In early times, the field was focused on explaining language change (how language features, such as phonemes, evolved in time due to usage)<sup>5</sup>. It also investigated situations and outcomes of language contact (when two groups with different languages come together for whatever social circumstances – voluntarily or forced)<sup>6</sup>, and later it examined how language use is hierarchically organized in urban societies<sup>7</sup>. In this late stage, researchers were able to correlate patterns of speech with groups of people who share some social features (such as income, level of education, age, gender, and attributed ethnicity)<sup>8</sup>. This approach, called variationist sociolinguistics, reached a high level of sophistication being grounded in larger corpus and hardcore statistics. Their main empirical finding was that language variation and change were systematic. Since its beginning and to the present, practitioners of variationist

---

<sup>3</sup> As per institutional information, the CUNY system had 271,242 students in Fall 2019. Percentages for Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity and College in Fall 2019 (before the Covid-19 pandemic) shows that, in senior colleges (with 4-year programs that lead to a Bachelor's Degree), the Hispanic student body represents 26.2%, below Whites (27.1%) but over Asian/Pacific Islanders (23.3%) and Blacks (23.1%). In community colleges (with 2-year programs that lead to an Associate Degree), Hispanics are by far the major group (38.1%), followed by Blacks (29.2%), Asian/Pacific Islander (17%), and White (15.3%). The total number for undergraduates shows that Hispanic (30.2%) is the largest group in the overall student body, followed by Black (21.2%), White (25.2%) and Asian/Pacific Islander (23.1%). See, CUNY Office of Institutional Research, Student Data Book. Available at <https://bit.ly/3uXNeFO>. On the other hand, the apparent student diversity is not reflected in Faculty profiles. Out of the 7,652 full-time CUNY faculty, in 2017, 4,495 (58.7%) of professors were White, while only 931 (9.6%) were Hispanic/Latino. See, The Office of Recruitment and Diversity, CUNY. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3sPCXcZ>

<sup>4</sup> Peter Trudgill, *Sociolinguistics: An introduction to language and society*, London, Penguin Books, 1995.

<sup>5</sup> Uriel Weinreich, William Labov and Marvin Herzog, *Empirical foundations for a theory of language change*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1968.

<sup>6</sup> Charles Ferguson, "Diglossia", *Word* 15, 1959, p. 325-340.

<sup>7</sup> William Labov, *The social stratification of English in New York City*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1966.

<sup>8</sup> William Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972.

sociolinguistics have expressed an uncompromised, blind, descriptive search for regularities, correlations, and patterns between language and society<sup>9</sup>.

This trend of empirical studies came along with an increasing notoriety of sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists in public debates and committees devoted to language planning and policy issues. In fact, the idea that the socially-based language variations could be scientifically ascertained despite all the irregularities of actual language use, brought with it the idea that language could also be planned. In this regard, Monica Heller and Bonnie McElhinny have recently discussed how the booming of sociolinguistics in the second half of the XXth century was associated with the political needs of States around the world to manage complex language situations within their territories<sup>10</sup>. For instance, postcolonial states in East Asia and Africa required knowledgeable bureaucrats to deal with multilingual and multicultural populations in an attempt to integrate them into the project of a modern nation. And similar challenges faced the Soviet Union in its attempt to build around proletarian party politics, diplomacy, and a shared language a solid block of nations in a context of disparaging cultural differences<sup>11</sup>. Within the US, the heated public debate around the African American Vernacular English contributed to publicizing the role and figure of sociolinguists<sup>12</sup> (Labov's work on the political engagement of linguists is a landmark<sup>13</sup>). However, from this "planning" perspective, language diversity and variation were considered 'problems' to be solved.

In a context of fruitful but restrictive empirical studies, scholars thrived to circumvent the variationist approach. One of the main detours from this scientific, structural perspective consisted in challenging the idea of language as a discrete and autonomous entity, with a kind of natural-like existence detachable from history and politics. As Makoni and Pennycook argued, the idea that languages can be objectified and individualized resulted from an epistemic process brought about as the Western Christian/colonial project unfolded<sup>14</sup>. Language borders drawn with a colonial mindset to rule over multilingual populations were reinforced by the means of missionary and scientific linguistics<sup>15</sup> that in turn rendered language as an artifact<sup>16</sup>. It can be said that language as we came to know it is a modern

---

<sup>9</sup> Penelope Eckert, "The Future of Variation Studies", *All Star Panel on the past, present and Future of New Ways of Analyzing Variation and Variation Studies. NWAV40*, Georgetown University, October 28, 2011; See also, Penelope Eckert, "Three Waves of Variation Study: The Emergence of Meaning in the Study of Sociolinguistic Variation", *Annu. Rev. Anthropol.* 41, 2012, p. 87–100.

<sup>10</sup> Monica Heller and Bonnie McElhinny, *Language, Capitalism, Colonialism: Toward a Critical History*, Tonawanda, NY, University of Toronto Press, 2017.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, "Making communist linguistics", p. 135-139.

<sup>12</sup> Deborah Cameron, Elizabeth Frazer, Penelope Harvey, Ben Rampton & Kay Richardson, "Ethics, Advocacy and Empowerment: Issues of Method in Researching Language", *Language & Communication* 13/2, 1993, p. 81-94.

<sup>13</sup> William Labov, "Objectivity and Commitment in Linguistic Science: The Case of the Black English Trial in Ann Arbor", *Language in Society* 11/2, 1982, p. 165-201.

<sup>14</sup> Sinfreed Makoni & Alastair Pennycook, "Disinventing and (Re)Constituting Languages", *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies* 2/3, 2005, p. 137-156.

<sup>15</sup> Joseph Errington, *Linguistics in a Colonial World: A Story of Language, Meaning, and Power*, Malden, Wiley-Blackwell, 2007.

<sup>16</sup> The 'artificial' view of language is "a view in which language is seen as a manipulable, bounded artifact consisting of (grammatical) 'structures' with a clear function, denotation. Such a view would be expressed, for instance, in utterances such as 'I need to work a bit on my French' or 'His German needs some polishing, it is a bit

invention, a creation of political and managerial thinking oriented to bringing some stability to an otherwise motley cultural world – at least to the eyes and ears of the European speaker.

In contrast, non-variationist sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists focused not on structures but on the actual fluid semiotic practices of speakers and their own ways of experiencing and conceptualizing languages and meaning. The concept of language ideology was key in operationalizing this approach, as “it shifts attention away from stable, contextless linguistic notions to deeply socioculturally, historically, and politically invested notions of language and language usage, emphasizing that the very existence of ‘(a) language’ is a result of ideological construction and therefore involves power, authority, and control”<sup>17</sup>. In this vein, sociolinguistics followed suit with postmodern thinking in the deconstruction of the narrative of neutrality in scientific linguistics<sup>18</sup>, and engaged in theorizing the relationships between language and politics, which, as Judith Butler noted, are initiated by raising the issue that “any theory of politics requires a subject, [and] needs from the start to presume its subject, the referentiality of language, [as well as] the integrity of the institutional description assumption that it provides”<sup>19</sup>. For language scholars, putting into question the modern rational subject and its denotational language (archetypically the means of codification of empirical knowledge) translated into the debunking of the native speaker’s centrality in language theory as well as a renewed interest in the non-referential, pragmatics of language.

To account for language as a social practice, attending to its cultural, political and economic conditions of realization, statistics fall short. While postmodern approaches to languages sidestep quantification and correlations, they don’t dismiss “the empirical”, the physical and “material” reality<sup>20</sup>. On the contrary, the epistemology of critical sociolinguistics is grounded in an access to language practices through the very same acts that constitute its research object: talking and interacting with people. Language practices are simultaneously an object and *the* means of research. The result of these ethnographically-informed approaches is “not a form of expert knowledge, but rather an informed and situated social practice, one which can account for what we see, but which also knows why we see what we do, and what it means to tell the story”<sup>21</sup>. The analytical conclusions of postmodern and critical sociolinguistics do not extrapolate to other social contexts, neither are they intended

---

rusty,’ in which ‘a language (name)’ is metaphorically seen as an object one can obtain, possess, manufacture, and improve upon. This view [...] is a key ingredient of modernity and thus a rather recent construct, but it has become the most widespread view of language both in popular and in scientific circles. Linguistics has contributed in no small degree to the cultural construction of language in general as a stable, contextless individual mental object, and language and educational policies as well as larger nation-building programs have been deeply influenced by this ideology.” Jean Blommaert, “Language Ideology”, *Encyclopedia of Language & Linguistics* vol. 6, ed. Keith Brown, Elsevier, 2006, p. 510-522.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 512.

<sup>18</sup> See Lyotard’s discussion on the legitimation of scientific and narrative knowledge. Jean Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: a Report on Knowledge*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1984, p. 27-31.

<sup>19</sup> Judith Butler, “Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of ‘Postmodernism’”, *Feminists Theorize the Political*, eds. Judith Butler & Joan W. Scott, London, Routledge, 1992, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Shalini Shankar & Jillian R. Cavanaugh, “Language and Materiality in Global Capitalism”, *Annu. Rev. Anthropol.* 41, 2012, p. 355–369.

<sup>21</sup> Monica Heller, *Paths to Post-nationalism: A Critical Ethnography of Language and Identity*, Oxford, Oxford UP, 2011, p. 6

to support predictions about the evolution of languages. As such, their findings are less appealing for language policy makers.

In sum, according to Garcia, Flores and Spotti, by the end of the century, postmodern sociolinguistics had gained a new direction. Its goal was “no longer to objectively describe the nature of language, objectively describe the linguistic practices of communities or uncritically offer policy solutions. Instead, the role of sociolinguists is to understand the ideological process at play in how individuals and communities construct and resist boundaries between language varieties and the ways that these negotiations interact with existing language policies.”<sup>22</sup> This call for a less pretended-to-be neutral description of language practices (i.e. how people speak) and more acute understanding of what it means for people to speak or not speak (or being perceived as speaking or not speaking) a language in a specific time and location is particularly poignant for researchers of the Spanish speaking population in the US.

### Three concepts for a critical understanding of the Spanish in the US

#### *Glottopolitics*

The CUNY Graduate Center associate professor José del Valle, a “bilingual scholar of Galician ancestry”<sup>23</sup>, argues that Glottopolitics is an approach, or rather a perspective, “a look at the places where language and politics are inseparable.”<sup>24</sup> His definition is tied to the initial use of the term glottopolitics by French scholars L. Guespin and J.B. Marcellesi in their own theoretical attempt to reintegrate politics back into sociolinguistics. Their foundational work considered the effects of glottopolitical interests on every action society exerts upon language, whether consciously or not. They deem the term “glottopolitics” necessary “to encompass all the facts of language in which society’s action takes the form of politics.”<sup>25</sup> These actions may range from the overt and transient linguistic regulations by the State, such as what language must be used and learned at schools, to other measures that may indirectly impact “the social distribution of the word”<sup>26</sup> – for instance labor legislation which sets up the content, the roles and the scope of negotiations between employers and unionized employees –, to the more private, anodyne, and routine monitoring of how people use words.

As a perspective, the glottopolitical gaze looks at power through the lens of language. It assumes that social control and authority upon language use and representation is not arranged as a sort of vertical structure emulating bureaucratic institutions. Instead, it reveals that attempts to seize control of language are manifest as a set of reticular forces in “processes that adumbrate the constitution or disarticulation of subjectivities implied in

---

<sup>22</sup> Ofelia García, Nelson Flores & Massimiliano Spotti, “Language and Society: A Critical Poststructuralist Perspective”, *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Society*, eds. Ofelia García, Nelson Flores & Massimiliano Spotti, 2016, Oxford, Oxford UP, p. 546.

<sup>23</sup> Ofelia Garcia & Lara Alonso, “The glotopolítica of English teaching to Latinx students in the US”, *Worldwide English Language Education Today : Ideologies, Policies and Practices*, eds. Ali Al-Issa and Seyyed-Abdolhamid Mirhosseini, London, Routledge, 2019, p. 117-134.

<sup>24</sup> José del Valle, “Glotopolítica y teoría del lenguaje”, *Anuario de Glotopolítica* 1, 2017, p. 17.

<sup>25</sup> Louis, Guespin et Jean-Baptiste Marcellesi, “Pour la glottopolitique”, *Langages* 83, 21<sup>e</sup> année, 1986, p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, Guespin and Marcellesi, p. 15

accessing and distributing resources of different kinds.”<sup>27</sup> Thus, glottopolitical interest is focused on formal and informal language policy decisions as well as their means of reinforcement<sup>28</sup>, works of codification and standardization of languages, and the sociopolitical dynamics of collegiate bodies for language hygiene, among others. But the interest goes beyond texts and institutions. There are other fluid “battlegrounds” of glottopolitical appeal where to look at, as they also reveal language-power dynamics, for instance in job interviews, classroom settings, in aisles of supermarkets or in online fora, all scenarios in which language works as a facilitator, a barrier, a scapegoat or even as a proxy to disguise political conflicts and social dissent.

Recent works stemming from the Grupo de Glotopolítica at the CUNY Graduate Center under Del Valle’s orientation fall in three main areas of research. First is a political history of the Spanish language, which entails a revision of key debates and turning points around its status worldwide. This line of research revolves around the instability of Spanish as a historic cultural object and the sociopolitical tensions surrounding its processes of constitution<sup>29</sup>. It builds upon the aforementioned idea that languages are not given natural objects, and thus it shifts the question about the origins of the Spanish language to its “metalinguistic” elaboration, brought about by the means of techno-political operations. The main argument touches on the very concept of language “historicity”. In Del Valle’s words “Languages are not discrete objects that, having an autonomous existence, can be rendered visible or invisible by historical agents and circumstances; they are instead historical constructs, and the operations – discursive and institutional – that produce their visibility are inherent to their historical condition.”<sup>30</sup>

A second line of research relates to the shifting modes of representing national and transnational Spanish-speaking communities within the race to exploit the Spanish language in international markets, in a gesture typical of late capitalism<sup>31</sup>. Glottopolitical inquiry has focused mainly on the efforts to recast the collaboration between institutions in Europe and the Americas to promote the language<sup>32</sup>, alongside other business, such as tourism and international investment. Researchers have examined the updated versions of normative works from the Royal Academy of Spanish – the Dictionary, the Orthography and the

---

<sup>27</sup> José del Valle y Victor Meirinho, “Español (y Castellano)”, *Vocabulario de las filosofías occidentales. Diccionario de los intraducibles*, dir. Barbara Cassin, coord. en español Natalia Prunes y Guido Herzovic, México, Siglo XXI, 2018, s. p.

<sup>28</sup> José del Valle, “Language planning and its discontents: lines of flight in Haugen’s view of the politics of standardization”, *Lang Policy* 19, 2020, p. 301–317.

<sup>29</sup> José del Valle (ed.), *A Political History of Spanish: The Making of a Language*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2013.

<sup>30</sup> José del Valle, “Ways of seeing language in nineteenth-century Galicia, Spain”, *Invisible Languages in the Nineteenth Century*, eds. Anna Havinga and Nils Langer, Oxford, Peter Lang. 2015, p. 281-298.

<sup>31</sup> Monica Heller & Alexandre Duchêne, *Language in Late Capitalism. Pride and Profit*, New York, Routledge, 2011.

<sup>32</sup> Darren Paffey & Clare Mar-Molinero, “Globalisation, linguistic norms and language authorities: Spain and the Panhispanic language policy”, *Spanish in the United States and other Contact Environments. Sociolinguistics, Ideology and Pedagogy* (Lengua y Sociedad en el Mundo Hispánico, 21), eds. Manuel Lacorte and Jennifer Leeman, Madrid, Iberoamericana/Vervuert, p. 159-173.

Grammar – and their ideological moves to embrace “unity in diversity”<sup>33</sup>. Moreover, the study of other types of corpus, such as the agreements between multinational companies and academic institutions, revealed the bumpy path towards an international certification of Spanish which would have an uncontested legitimacy across Spanish-speaking countries, as well as how stakeholders’ decisions seek to secure a position in the business of “selling” the Spanish language<sup>34</sup>.

Shifting imperial linguistic borders and the flux of modern immigration have had an impact in the national and transnational representation of the Spanish-speaking world vis-a-vis the international market. In the US, the projections that Latinxs will be the largest ethnic minority in the country in the next decades have contributed to fine-tuning the discourse of Pan-Hispanism embraced and promoted by institutions such as the RAE and the Instituto Cervantes<sup>35</sup>. And yet, beyond the positive overtones of a promising market, Del Valle and Garcia argues that Spanish in the US “was and continues to be a contested discursive site in which questions of national identity, political mobilization, public interest and geopolitical maneuvering are played out.”<sup>36</sup>

In this context, the third line of research, shared with Translanguaging and Raciolinguistics, is the language education of Spanish-English bilinguals. There are two areas of interest in here. First there is the historical and institutionalized bias against racialized, non-English native immigrant students in the US, who are seen as linguistically deficient and thus in need of remedial linguistic education in English<sup>37</sup> (see below). And second, the pedagogical challenges of teaching Spanish to a demographically heterogeneous and sociolinguistically complex student body which brings different varieties of the Spanish language to the classroom, either as native or as heritage speakers<sup>38</sup>. This second question relates to issues of standardization which is central to school goals and which in turn rely on the differential status that national varieties of Spanish have worldwide. In the US context, the question of which Spanish to teach is paramount. Is there such a thing as the Spanish *of* the US? And what should be the norm taught to Latinx students? Following the idea that the goal of critical sociolinguistics is not to provide solutions, the analysis refrains from advising textbook authors, educators and language instructors what to do. In this sense, according to Del Valle, “what is crucial (...) is less the choice of the particular norm over others than the

---

<sup>33</sup> José del Valle, “Total Spanish: The Politics of a Pan-Hispanic Grammar”, *PMLA/Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 124/3, p. 880-886.

<sup>34</sup> María del Rocío Carranza Brito, “La evaluación del español : entre la academia y el mercado comercial”, *Doblele, revista de lengua y literatura* 6, 2020, p. 68-81.

<sup>35</sup> José del Valle, “Política del lenguaje y geopolítica : el español, la RAE y la población latina de Estados Unidos”, *El dardo en la Academia: Esencia y vigencia de las Academias de la Lengua Española*, eds. Silvia Senz y Montserrat Alberte, Melusina, 2011, p. 551-590.

<sup>36</sup> José del Valle & Ofelia García, “Introduction to the making of Spanish: US Perspectives”, *A Political History of Spanish : The Making of a Language*, ed. José del Valle, Cambridge, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2013, p. 249.

<sup>37</sup> Ofelia García & Lara Alonso, *op. cit.*, 2019.

<sup>38</sup> Lourdes Ortega, “The Study of Heritage Language Development From a Bilingualism and Social Justice Perspective”, *Language Learning* 70, 2020, p. 15-53.



importance that students be made aware that a choice was made and be equipped with the necessary analytical tools to see the cultural, political, and social context of the choice.”<sup>39</sup>

### *Translanguaging*

As mentioned, language education of Spanish-speakers in the US is the main issue for Translanguaging scholars. Initially this term referred to the speaking practices of bilinguals<sup>40</sup> as well as to pedagogical efforts to promote their homegrown linguistic skills at schools<sup>41</sup>. The current definition no longer mentions bilinguals: “Translanguaging is the deployment of a speaker’s full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages,”<sup>42</sup> suggesting that every speaker mobilizes Translanguage. In both instances, the definition is based on a key distinction between “named” languages, referring to the invented bounded units corresponding to national territories and their polity (“English”, the language, originally from England, spoke by the “English people” or “Wayuunaiki”, the language of the Wayuu Nation/People in Northern Colombia) and languages as “entities without names, as sets of lexical and structural features that make up an individual’s repertoire and are deployed to enable communication.”<sup>43</sup>

Ofelia Garcia, Professor Emerita at The CUNY Graduate Center – and a scholar of Cuban origin – has vastly discussed Translanguaging in Latinx students along with other scholars from CUNY<sup>44</sup>. Since her early theorizations, she has held an “internal view” of bilingualism, which is a focus on bilingual practices from the perspective of their users (the “bilingualing”<sup>45</sup>), not on the language itself. This standpoint translated into a contention with widespread assumptions and representations of bilinguals’ speech, such as code-switching. Following Grosjean’s trailblazing argument that bilinguals are not two monolinguals in one person<sup>46</sup>, and Cummings<sup>47</sup> reflection on the “two solitude assumption” of bilingual education,

---

<sup>39</sup> José del Valle, “The politics of normativity and globalization: which Spanish in the classroom?”, *Modern Language Journal* 98/1, 2014, p. 358-372.

<sup>40</sup> García, in 2009, stated: “Translanguaging is the act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential”. Ofelia García, “Education, multilingualism and translanguaging in the 21st century”, *Multilingual Education for Social Justice: Globalising the local*, eds. Ajit Mohanty, Minati Panda, Robert Phillipson and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, New Delhi, Orient Blackswan (former Orient Longman), 2009, p. 128-145.

<sup>41</sup> Ofelia García, *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective*, Malden, Basil/Blackwell, 2009.

<sup>42</sup> Ricardo Otheguy, Ofelia García & Wallis Reid. “Clarifying translanguaging and deconstructing named languages: A perspective from linguistics”, *Applied Linguistics Review* 6/3, 2015, p. 283.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 286.

<sup>44</sup> Notably, with her husband, sociolinguist Ricardo Otheguy, as well as many other CUNY fellow researchers such as Tatiana Klein, Kate Seltzer, Kate Menken and Laura Ascenzi-Moreno. Garcia has also published extensively with former graduate students of her at the Graduate Center, such as Nelson Flores, Christian Solorza, Sara Vogel, Gladys Aponte, Khan Le, Mike Mena, Jorge Alvis, and Lara Alonso. Her personal website ([www.ofeliagarcia.org](http://www.ofeliagarcia.org)) offers a complete list of her publications.

<sup>45</sup> Ofelia García, “‘Bilingualing’ without schooling. The role of comprehensive education”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Comprehensive Education: The way forward*, eds. Heve Varenne and Edmund Gordon, New York, The Edwin Mellen Press, 2009, p. 187-216.

<sup>46</sup> François Grosjean, “Neurolinguists, Beware! The Bilingual Is Not Two Monolinguals in One Person”, *Brain and Language* 36, 1989, p. 3-15.

Translanguaging refuses any duality, social or psychological, disguised in language performance. For their advocates, languages do not pile up in speakers' cognition as entries in watertight compartments, instead they enhance speakers' inventory of semiotic resources available for meaningful communication. In this regard, García and fellow scholars clarify that "Translanguaging does not refer to two separate languages nor to a synthesis of different language practices or to a hybrid mixture."<sup>48</sup> Both terms refer to different realities, according to Li Wei: while code-switching alludes to alternation of linguistic codes in a particular communicative episode, Translanguaging rather refers to the overall "process of meaning- and sense-making."<sup>49</sup>

It may sound counterintuitive to deny that a person who is socially identified as a bilingual does not speak two languages. How can one be bilingual and not to speak *two* languages? How is it that a Latinx student in NYC, for instance, raised in Spanish at home and schooled in English *does not* speak *two* languages, Spanish and English, and is thus able to produce something new, like "Spanglish"? For Translanguaging scholars, the key to explaining this is itself a point of departure<sup>50</sup> and runs through political considerations, since the framing of psycholinguistic differences of bilinguals (especially of racialized speakers such as Latinx students<sup>51</sup>), according to García, have "enormous consequences as we think about their schooling."<sup>52</sup>

Labels such as *Spanglish*, *Singlish*, or *Chinglish* are used to refer to stigmatized ways of speaking<sup>53</sup>. In the case of Spanglish, in its derogatory use in schools, it "refers not to what is socially considered English, but to 'corrupted' forms of Spanish used by US Latinos."<sup>54</sup> Yet, for educators working with the Translanguaging perspective, students' repertoires are valued and leveled up through a pedagogy that promotes social justice, while creating space for the deployment and appropriation of semiotic practices that stimulate diversity. In a

---

<sup>47</sup> Jim Cummins, "Teaching for Transfer: Challenging the Two Solitudes Assumption in Bilingual Education", *Encyclopedia of Language and Education*, ed. Nancy Hornberger, Boston, MA, Springer, 2008.

<sup>48</sup> Ofelia García & Li Wei, *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p 21.

<sup>49</sup> Li Wei, *Translanguaging and Code-Switching: what's the difference?*, May 9th, 2018, blog entry: <https://blog.oup.com/2018/05/translanguaging-code-switching-difference/>.

<sup>50</sup> The point Translanguaging raises is that there are no frontiers in the mind. Language is a unitary indivisible reality in people's cognition. Cultural and linguistic frontiers do not map unto the speakers' brains. "The myriad of linguistic features mastered by bilinguals (phonemes, words, constructions, rules, etc.) occupy a single, undifferentiated cognitive terrain that is not fenced off into anything like the two areas suggested by the two socially named languages". See, Ricardo Otheguy, Ofelia García, and Wallis Reid, "A translanguaging view of the linguistic system of bilinguals", *Applied Linguistics Review* 10/4, 2019, p. 625-651.

<sup>51</sup> Ofelia García, "Racializing the Language Practices of U.S. Latinos: Impact on their education", *How the United States Racializes Latinos: White hegemony and its consequences*, eds. José Cobas, Joe Feagin, and Jorge Duany, New York, Routledge, 2009, p. 101-115.

<sup>52</sup> Ofelia García, *Bilingual education in the 21st Century*, cit., p. 90.

<sup>53</sup> Is Spanglish or Chinglish a case of Translanguaging? Li Wei offers this evasive response: "My main concern here is not whether these and other examples are instances of (different kinds of) Translanguaging, but more generally that the-more-the-better approaches to multilingualism seem increasingly over-simplistic and inadequate for the complex linguistic realities of the 21st century". In doing it, he focuses on the monolingual assumptions driving the use of those terms. Li Wei, "Translanguaging as a Practical Theory of Language", *Applied Linguistics* 39/1, 2018, p. p. 14.

<sup>54</sup> Ofelia García & Li Wei, *op. cit.*, 2014, p. 41

Translanguaging classroom, where heteroglossia is the promoted, “the most important question is not which language is in use, but rather what signs are in use and action, what do these signs point to, what are the tensions and conflicts among those signs, and how are the voices of the participants represented in them.”<sup>55</sup>

Finally, within the Translanguaging framework, bilingualism is seen as an enriched semiotic practice and as an agentive social process (meaning that languages use accomplishes social goals purposefully) with schools as the institutional site of contention. Indeed, prior to the rise of Translanguaging as a “practical theory of language”<sup>56</sup>, the impetus behind theories of translanguaging, as Pennycook reminds us, “has been as much pedagogical as sociolinguistic. It has emerged from sociolinguistic studies of classrooms and has been applied to classrooms based on an understanding of the sociolinguistic context of education.”<sup>57</sup> In this regard, Garcia’s scholarship on Translanguaging has revolved around contesting the erasure and dismissal of Latinxs bilingualism in US education. Her work on the bilingual education policy and programs for Spanish speaking students resonates with the glottopolitical interest in the historically dominant and racialized representation of Spanish as “the language of the conquered and the colonized; the language of immigrants; the language of many; the language of the uneducated and poor; a racialized language.”<sup>58</sup> This is a line of research that is of the utmost interest for Raciolinguistics.

### *Raciolinguistics*

Raciolinguistics is, like Glottopolitics, a perspective, rather than a theory or a discipline. It seeks to look at language through the lens of race, and vice versa. The critical project can be summarized as an attempt “to race language and to language race”<sup>59</sup>, implying that both poles are not static concepts but intertwined social processes. In fact, the Raciolinguistics perspective takes as a premise the fact that it is “impossible to discuss one without the other and seeks to examine the co-construction of language and race—or the ways that both language and race are inextricably interrelated with one another.”<sup>60</sup> Behind this argument resonates Bonnie Urcioli’s early work around the racialization of Puerto Rican speakers in the US, where she declared that in regard to race and language, “what seems at first glance a simple classification of language turns out to be fundamentally classification of people.”<sup>61</sup> For Raciolinguistics, it is imperative to focus on a critical examination of their historical co-

---

<sup>55</sup> Adrian Blackledge, Angela Creese and Jaspreet Kahur Taki, “Beyond Multilingualism: Heteroglossia in Practice”, *The Multilingual Turn*, ed. Stephen May, London and New York, Routledge, 2013, p. 212.

<sup>56</sup> Li Wei, “Translanguaging as a Practical Theory of Language”, *cit.*, p. 9–30.

<sup>57</sup> Alastair Pennycook, “Mobile times, mobile terms. The trans-super-poly-metro movement”, *Sociolinguistics. Theoretical Debates*, ed. Nicolas Coupland, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2016, p. 202.

<sup>58</sup> Ofelia García & Leah Maso, “Where in the World is U.S. Spanish? Creating a space of opportunity for U.S. Latinos”, *Language and Poverty*, eds. Wayne Harbert, Sally McConnell-Ginet, Amanda Miller & John Whitman, Clevedon, Multilingual Matters, 2009, p. 78-101.

<sup>59</sup> Alim, H. Samy, “Introducing Raciolinguistics. Racing Language and Language Race in Hyperracial Times”, *Raciolinguistics, How Language Shapes Our Ideas About Race*, eds. H. Samy Alim, John R. Rickford & Arnetta F. Ball, Oxford, Oxford UP, 2016, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> Nelson Flores, “Why We Need a Raciolinguistics Perspective”, June 14 2015, Blog post: <https://educationallinguist.wordpress.com/2015/06/14/why-we-need-raciolinguistics/>

<sup>61</sup> Bonnie Urcioli, *op. cit.*, 2013, p. 2.

constitution to inform political practice to dismantle “the white supremacy that permeates mainstream institutions as a product of colonialism.”<sup>62</sup>

In advancing this endeavor, Nelson Flores and Jonathan Rosa, Latinx scholars<sup>63</sup>, have analyzed how racialized immigrants to the US are by default treated from a perspective of deficit. Popular culture, media coverage, jokes and puns, but more strikingly bilingual education policy reproduce the stereotype of a deficient speaker, positioning them as forever foreigners, making it hard to assimilate. For Rosa, “the notion that US Latinxs produce neither ‘correct’ English nor Spanish invokes the idea they utilize no language properly, which simultaneously constructs them as Raciolinguistic Others and legitimates their broader societal marginalization.”<sup>64</sup> For instance, Raciolinguistics scholarship seeks to understand how it is that first, first-and-a-half, second and third generation Latinxs who grew up monolinguals in American English continued to be perceived as speaking in a non-standard form. They have found that the explanation does not come by studying the “actual” language practices of Latinx (what a variationist sociolinguist would masterfully do), but by delving into the dominant “modes of perceptions” of their ways of speaking, their “literacy practices, physical features, bodily comportment, and sartorial style<sup>65</sup>”. In sum, the answer Raciolinguistics provides is not how actually Latinxs speak, but rather how Latinxs came to be heard and seen by dominant speakers.

Raciolinguistics introduces thus a Copernican turn: it focuses on the dominant perception of racialized bodies and languages. As Rosa exemplified with his groundbreaking ethnography of Latinx students in a Chicago public school, the goal of raciolinguistics research “is not to document typologically Latinx’s racial characteristics and linguistic practices, but rather to interrogate the processes through which Latinx becomes a racially perceivable and linguistically intelligible category.”<sup>66</sup> Thus, when raciolinguistics shifts its interest from individual verbal practices and interactions to the social perception of racialized language, what they find is “the historical and structural processes that organize the modes of stigmatization in which deficit perspectives are rooted.”<sup>67</sup> This is a structural process that follows a logic of race that took centuries to build and continues evolving even today<sup>68</sup>.

A key actor in the logic of race is “the white listener subject”. Though not a “flesh and bone” individual, it refers to an ideological position drawn from what is called in critical race

---

<sup>62</sup> Jonathan Rosa & Nelson Flores, “Unsettling race and language: Toward a raciolinguistic perspective”, *Language in Society* 46/5, 2017, p. 637.

<sup>63</sup> Flores, of Ecuadorian origin, graduated from The CUNY Graduate Center under Ofelia García’s supervision, and Rosa, of Puerto Rican background, graduated from Stanford University.

<sup>64</sup> Jonathan Rosa, *Looking like a Language, Sounding like a Race: Raciolinguistic Ideologies and the Learning of Latinidad*, Oxford, Oxford UP, 2019, p. 127.

<sup>65</sup> Jonathan Rosa & Nelson Flores, “Reimagining race and language. From raciolinguistics ideologies to a raciolinguistic perspective”, *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Race*, eds. H. Samy Alim, Angela Reyes, Paul V. Kroskrity, Oxford, Oxford UP, 2020, p. 93.

<sup>66</sup> Jonathan Rosa, *op. cit.*, 2019, p.7.

<sup>67</sup> Jonathan Rosa & Nelson Flores, *op. cit.*, 2017, p. 622

<sup>68</sup> H. Samy Alim, “Who’s Afraid of the Transracial Subject?: Raciolinguistics and the Political Project of Transracialization”, *Raciolinguistics, How Language Shapes Our Ideas About Race*, eds. H. Samy Alim, John R. Rickford and Arnetha F. Ball, Oxford, Oxford UP, 2016, p. 38.

studies the “white gaze”, which is “a perspective that privileges dominant white perspectives on the linguistic and cultural practices of racialized communities.”<sup>69</sup> Rosa and Flores argue that the allegedly neutral category of a “standard” language we all refer to is an expression of that culturally dominant and institutionalized view of language in academic institutions. At US schools, American Standard English stands for “White middle-class norms” and not for an objective set of language patterns and practices. Year after year, students of color – bilingual English-Spanish US born Latinx students, US-born African American students, Afro-Caribbean students from English-speaking countries (such as Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas, to mention a few) – are positioned as long-term English learners, heritage language learners, and Standard English learners, with the intention of teaching them the “standard” language. But research has shown this is a dead-end path. The pervasive and institutionalized logic of race-language determines that it doesn’t matter how “good” their English is or how adept they are with their bilingual or multilingual repertoires, they will fail standardized exams and will “never” achieve the prestigious forms that an idealized speaker (which happens to be imagined by default as culturally White) would perform.

In conclusion, “Raciolinguistic ideologies produce racialized speaking subjects who are constructed as linguistically deviant even when engaging in linguistic practices positioned as normative or innovative when produced by privileged white subjects,”<sup>70</sup> Rosa and Flores claimed in their seminal work. The deficient/deviant speaker is a social construction resulting from a process of raciolinguistic *enregisterment*, “whereby linguistic and racial forms are jointly constructed as sets and rendered mutually recognizable as named languages/varieties and racial categories.”<sup>71</sup> Put differently, sound, words, or expressions become emblemized as to index a whole social group, so that it is enough to notice the language token (e.g. *ain’t*) to categorize the speaker’s social and racial identity (“low income”, “uneducated”, “Black”). However, the inverse process is all the more striking, as Rosa discovered in his ethnographic work in Chicago, since once this socio-semiotic device is established and institutionally reinforced on a daily basis, members of the racialized group can be “heard” producing those emblemized and stigmatized forms even when they are not speaking, a process that in Rosa’s felicitous words refers to the idea that people can “look” like a language and “sound” like a race.

## **Glottopolitics, Translanguaging and Raciolinguistics beyond the US**

In sum, what do these three perspectives on language have in common? According to my descriptive argument, they all benefit from the postmodern turn in philosophy and the humanities, especially in regards to the de-essentialization of referential language and the rationality of the modern subject. It sets out a common ground marked by four premises: 1. A rejection of the idea of language as an autonomous, discrete, and bounded entity; 2. A self-representation as a perspective, rather than a language theory in a canonical sense; 3. An

---

<sup>69</sup> Jonathan Rosa & Nelson Flores, “Undoing Appropriateness: Raciolinguistic Ideologies and Language Diversity in Education”, *Harvard Educational Review*, 85/2, 2015, p. 150-151.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150.

<sup>71</sup> Jonathan Rosa & Nelson Flores, “Unsettling race and language: Toward a raciolinguistic perspective”, *cit.*, p. 631.

interest in the historical, cultural and politico-economic conditions of language use, and thus an inclination for interdisciplinarity; 4. A main concern on language education, be it at the level of policy making (Glottopolitics), models and pedagogies of bilingual education (Translanguaging), or overall ideological framing of students' competences and skills based on the pervasive logic of race (Raciolinguistics).

There is also a fifth premise: the analytical effort comes together with social engagement and advocacy for the Spanish-speaking community in the US. Advocacy may explain why these concepts stem from Latinx scholars linked to the public system of higher education in New York, a city of intense global immigration. In this sense, I argue, their work offers a sample of situated knowledge, which means “knowledge that reflects the particular perspectives of the subject”<sup>72</sup>. We can see it in their insistence in calling themselves “perspectives”, a word that relates to an observer's position and not to a neutral, universal standpoint. Since situated knowledge allows us to see “how people may understand the same object in different ways that reflect the distinct relations in which they stand to it,”<sup>73</sup> my attempt to read them as a whole seeks to highlight their common ground as fertile soil to deepen the understanding of Spanish in the US from an “emic” point of view. Del Valle, Garcia, Flores, Rosa, are among those whose scholarship seeks to explain how Latinxs relationship with both their language(s) continues to be signed by discrimination and assimilation. Their own trajectories and experiences of family migration, racialization and of growing up bilingual in the US have to be taken into account to fully apprehend the importance of this scholarship in the highly hierarchized and departmentalized context of language studies in US institutions.

Finally, I now turn to a brief review of the scope of the three perspectives beyond the US with a Latin-American focus, starting with Glottopolitics. Today there are more works within the range of Glottopolitics in Latin-American universities. A stronghold with several years' experience is the group led by Elvira Narvaja de Arnoux<sup>74</sup> in Buenos Aires, who has influenced other nodes of sociolinguists in Uruguay<sup>75</sup> and Brazil<sup>76</sup>. Similarly, Chile, a country with a longstanding tradition of sociolinguistic studies, has seen the release of recent research along these lines. In Peru, recent work by V. Zavala<sup>77</sup>, exhibits the adoption of a postmodern perspective with influences of the glottopolitical approach. Likewise, Colombian

---

<sup>72</sup> Elizabeth Anderson, “Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Spring 2020 Edition, : <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/feminism-epistemology/>

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 2020, s. p.

<sup>74</sup> Elvira Narvaja de Arnoux & Susana Nothstein (eds.), *Temas de glotopolítica: Integración regional sudamericana y panhispanismo*, Buenos Aires, Biblos, 2014. See also, Elvira Narvaja de Arnoux, “La Glotopolítica: transformaciones de un campo disciplinario”, *Lenguajes: teorías y práctica*, Buenos Aires, Secretaría de Educación, 2000, p. 3-27.

<sup>75</sup> Pablo Albertoni, “Reivindicaciones glotopolíticas en espacios de tensión : la frontera uruguayo-brasileña”, *Glottopol* 32, 2019, p. 61-75.

<sup>76</sup> Xoan Lagares, *Qual Política Linguística? Desafios Glotopolíticos Contemporâneos*, São Paulo, Parábola, 2018.

<sup>77</sup> Virginia Zavala, “Hacia una apuesta etnográfica para la glotopolítica”, *Caracol* 20, 2020, p. 202–31. <http://www.revistas.usp.br/caracol/article/view/166167>

sociolinguists are also opening venues for this trend of studies in institutions and journals<sup>78</sup>. On the contrary, databases, journals, and professional networks in Central-America (from Panamá upwards to Guatemala) have not registered any recent publication with a glottopolitical stance<sup>79</sup>. Similarly in a search through databases, journals and professional networks, Mexico, like Brazil, with its own critical tradition of language studies, has seen no major project or researcher stand out in this field yet. Nor can it be said that Glottopolitics is cultivated or promoted in the Hispanic Caribbean Islands, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic or Cuba. Scholars from those countries with works in Glottopolitics are mostly based in the US<sup>80</sup>.

This said, Translanguaging has been taken up by many researchers worldwide. As international migration from South to North has increased dramatically in recent years, teachers have found their courses turned into multilingual classrooms, bringing up new challenges for which the received training and the institutional resources available have fallen short. It is there where Translanguaging can provide educators a resource for a better understanding of what students do with their languages in class, and lay the ground to start educating them with and within a pedagogy that appreciates their speaking practices, respects and value of cultural differences, and, of course, enhances their repertoires for school and for life.

Though Translanguaging has not taken root in Latin-American scholarship on bilingual education yet, there are some works produced by researchers on local educational scenarios and situations, published in English. Most of these authors are linked to US and Canadian academic institutions. Interestingly, the “translingual” wave first reached literary and cultural studies to illuminate the study of writers in whose work English and Spanish concurs, such as Junot Diaz, Susana Chavez-Silverman, and Giannina Braschi<sup>81</sup>. However, for the most part, these works are directed towards the academic public in the Global North, with the exception of some works from Brazil<sup>82</sup>, whose emergence may be associated with social

---

<sup>78</sup> Mireya Cisneros-Estupiñán, Yulia Cediél-Gomez y Gihoanny Olave-Arias, *Argumentación y política curricular para la paz: Enfoque glotopolítico*, Pereira, Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira, 2020. See also, Andrey Castiblanco & Daniel Rudas-Burgos, “Hacia una perspectiva glotopolítica y etnográfica de las literacidades”, *Inclusión & Desarrollo*, 8/1, 2021, p. 106-116.

<sup>79</sup> Although see, Silvia Rivera Alfaro, “La planificación lingüística en la Universidad de Costa Rica: Política lingüística de lenguaje inclusivo de género, su ejecución y relación con propuestas de universidades hispanohablantes”, *Revista de Filología y Lingüística de la Universidad de Costa Rica* 45/2, 2019, p. 269-294.

<sup>80</sup> For instance, see Juan Valdez, *Tracing Dominican Identity, The Writings of Pedro Henríquez Ureña*, Palgrave, Mc Millan, 2011. And see also his contribution to Del Valle’s *Political History of Spanish: Juan Valdez, “Language in the Dominican Republic: Between Hispanism and Panamericanism”*, *A Political History of Spanish: The Making of a Language*, ed. José del Valle, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2013, p. 182-196.

<sup>81</sup> See Ingrid Petkova, “Transculturation, Translanguaging and Junot Díaz’s Novel, The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao”, *Politeja* 60, 2019, p. 139-154. Euna Lee, “Cambio De Código y Lenguaje Transnacional *En Killer Crónicas*”, *Hispania* 101/3, 2018, p. 446–457. Francisco Moreno-Fernandez, “Yo-yo Boing! Or Literature as Translingual Practice”, *Poets, Philosophers, Lovers*, eds. Frederick Luis Aldama and Tess O’Dwyer, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020, p. 54-62.

<sup>82</sup> Maria Inéz Probst Lucena & Angela Cristina Cardoso, “Translanguagem como recurso pedagógico: uma discussão etnográfica sobre práticas de linguagem em uma escola bilíngue”, *Calidoscópico* 16/1, 2018, p. 143-151. And also Diogo Oliveira do Espírito Santo & Kelly Barros, “A invenção do monolinguismo no Brasil: por uma orientação translíngue em aulas de ‘línguas’”, *Calidoscópico* 16/1, 2018, 152-162.

policies centered around the education of the poor enacted by the socialists government in the 2000s. A fact worth considering for further exploration is the terminological instability associated to the word “translanguaging”, which has been incorporated into Spanish in different forms: *translenguaje*, *translengua*, *translingualismo*, *translenguar*<sup>83</sup>, or *trans[cultura]linguación*<sup>84</sup>. So far, however, the conversation about Translanguaging is held predominantly in English.

Finally, as Raciolinguistics is a more recent development in critical sociolinguistics, we can expect it to be less appropriated or irrigated throughout different networks of scholars in Latin-America. Collective works released by the main academic publishers in English include texts on Latin-American scenarios, but they are written from and for the international audience in the Global North<sup>85</sup>. In addition, since raciolinguistics addresses the contentious domain of race, we can anticipate that it needs to find a place in a long and well established tradition of studies of race and ethnicity with strong anthropological roots in universities across the subcontinent, from Mexico to Argentina, including the multilingual Caribbean region. Furthermore, there is a marked tendency to think of race and racialization in the Americas within the narrative of a great divide that underscores the differences between how they are experienced and how they are enforced in the US versus in Latin-American and Caribbean countries. For instance, when faced with events such as the murder of George Floyd by the police in 2020 and the subsequent social unrest that unfolded, the narrative says that this type of act doesn’t happen in Latin-America – a claim that is blatantly false, since Brazil and Colombia have a long history of state violence against their Black populations. Yet, the issue is that raciolinguistics in Latin-America and the Caribbean has to deal with the foundational myth of *mestizaje* that puts into question the “racial paradigm” of the US. This is to say, raciolinguistics in these latitudes has to work with a particular racial Other, the Indio<sup>86</sup>, a speaker of another tongue, with his/her own “inferior” rites, practices, and morality, a political subject that has been simultaneously represented as savage and noble.

## References

ALIM H. Samy, “Introducing Raciolinguistics. Racing Language and Languaging Race in Hyperracial Times”, *Raciolinguistics, How Language Shapes Our Ideas About Race*, eds. H. Samy Alim, John R. Rickford and Arnetha F. Ball, Oxford UP, 2016, 1-30.

---

<sup>83</sup> Christina Celic y Kate Seltzer, *El translenguar: una guía de CUNY-NYSIEB para educadores* (versión abreviada en español), s. f. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3uYHBHD>. See also Ofelia García, “El papel del translenguar en la enseñanza del español en los Estados Unidos”, *El español en los Estados Unidos: e pluribus unum? enfoque multidisciplinar*, coord. Domnita Dumitrescu and Gerardo Piña Rosales, Academia Norteamericana de la Lengua Española, 2013, p. 353-374.

<sup>84</sup> Yecid Ortega, “‘Teacher, ¿Puedo hablar en español?’ A Reflection on Plurilingualism and Translanguaging Practices in EFL”, *Revista Profile: Issues in Teachers’ Professional Development* 21/2, 2019, p. 155-170.

<sup>85</sup> See, for instance, Jennifer Roth-Gordon, “From Upstanding Citizen to North American Rapper and Back Again : The Racial Malleability of Poor Male Brazilian Youth”, *Raciolinguistics, How Language Shapes Our Ideas About Race*, eds. H. Samy Alim, John R. Rickford & Arnetha F. Ball, Oxford, Oxford UP, 2016, pp. 51-64.

<sup>86</sup> Peter Wade, *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America*, London, Pluto Press, Second edition, 2010.



- ANDERSON Elizabeth, “Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Spring 2020 Edition. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/feminism-epistemology/>.
- BLACKLEDGE Adrian, Angela Creese and Jaspreet Kahur Taki, “Beyond Multilingualism: Heteroglossia in Practice”, *The Multilingual Turn*, ed. Stephen May, London and New York, Routledge, 2013, 191-215.
- BLOMMAERT Jean, “Language Ideology”, *Encyclopedia of Language & Linguistics*, vol. 6, 2006, 510–522.
- BUTLER Judith, “Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of ‘Postmodernism’”, *Feminists Theorize the Political*, Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott, eds., London and New York, Routledge, 1992, 3-21.
- CAMERON Deborah, Elizabeth Frazer, Penelope Harvey, Ben Rampton, and Kay Richardson, “Ethics, Advocacy and Empowerment: Issues of Method in Researching Language”, *Language & Communication* 13/2, 1993, 81-94.
- CARRANZA BRITO María del Rocío, “La evaluación del español : entre la academia y el mercado comercial”. *Doblele, revista de lengua y literatura* 6, 2020, 68-81.
- CISNEROS-ESTUPIÑÁN Mireya, Yulia Cediél-Gomez y Gihoanny Olave-Arias, *Argumentación y política curricular para la paz: Enfoque glotopolítico*, Pereira, Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira, 2020.
- CASTIBLANCO Andrey & Daniel Rudas-Burgos, “Hacia una perspectiva glotopolítica y etnográfica de las literacidades”, *Inclusión & Desarrollo* 8/1, 2021, 106-116.
- CELIC Christina y Kate Seltzer, *El translenguar: una guía de CUNY-NYSIEB para educadores* (versión abreviada en español), s. f. <https://bit.ly/3uYHBHD>
- CUMMINS Jim, “Teaching for Transfer: Challenging the Two Solitudes Assumption in Bilingual Education”, *Encyclopedia of Language and Education*, ed. Nancy Hornberger, Boston, MA, Springer, 2008.
- DEL VALLE José, “Language planning and its discontents: lines of flight in Haugen’s view of the politics of standardization”, *Lang Policy* 19, 2020, 301-317.
- , “Glotopolítica y teoría del lenguaje”, *Anuario de Glotopolítica* 1, 2017, 17-39.
- , “Ways of seeing language in nineteenth-century Galicia, Spain”, *Invisible Languages in the Nineteenth Century*, eds. Anna Havinga and Nils Langer, Oxford, Peter Lang, 2015, 281-298.
- , “The politics of normativity and globalization: which Spanish in the classroom?” *Modern Language Journal* 98/1, 2014, 358-372.

- , "Política del lenguaje y geopolítica: el español, la RAE y la población latina de Estados Unidos", *El dardo en la Academia: Esencia y vigencia de las Academias de la Lengua Española*, eds. Silvia Senz y Montserrat Alberte, Melusina, 2011, 551-590.
- , "Total Spanish: The Politics of a Pan-Hispanic Grammar", *PMLA/Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 124/3, 2009, 880-886.
- DEL VALLE José (ed.), *A Political History of Spanish: The Making of a Language*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2013.
- DEL VALLE José & Ofelia Garcia, "Introduction to the making of Spanish: US Perspectives", *A Political History of Spanish : The Making of a Language*, ed. José del Valle, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2013, 249-259.
- DEL VALLE José y Victor Meirinho. Español (y Castellano), *Vocabulario de las filosofías occidentales. Diccionario de los intraducibles*, dir., Barbara Cassin, coord. en español Natalia Prunes y Guido Herzovic, México, Siglo XXI, 2018, s. p.
- ERRINGTON Joseph, *Linguistics in a Colonial World: A Story of Language, Meaning, and Power*, Malden, Wiley-Blackwell, 2007.
- ECKERT Penelope, "The Future of Variation Studies", All-star Panel on the past, present and future of Variation Studies, *New Ways of Analyzing Variation* 40, Georgetown University, October 28, 2011, p. 1-6.  
<https://web.stanford.edu/~eckert/PDF/FutureOFVariation.pdf>
- , "Three Waves of Variation Study: The Emergence of Meaning in the Study of Sociolinguistic Variation", *Annu. Rev. Anthropol.* 41, 2012, 87-100.
- FLORES Nelson, *Why We Need a Raciolinguistics Perspective*, June 14 2015, Blog post: <https://educationallinguist.wordpress.com/2015/06/14/why-we-need-raciolinguistics/>
- FLORES Nelson & Jonathan Rosa, "Undoing Appropriateness: Raciolinguistic Ideologies and Language Diversity in Education", *Harvard Educational Review*, 85/2, 2015, 149-171.
- FERGUSON Charles, "Diglossia", *Word* 15, 1959, 325-340.
- GARCÍA Ofelia, "El papel del translenguar en la enseñanza del español en los Estados Unidos", *El español en los Estados Unidos: e pluribus unum? enfoque multidisciplinar*, coord. Domnita Dumitrescu and Gerardo Piña Rosales, Academia Norteamericana de la Lengua Española, 2013, 353-374.
- , "Education, multilingualism and translanguaging in the 21st century", *Multilingual Education for Social Justice: Globalising the local*, ed. Ajit Mohanty, Minati Panda, Robert Phillipson and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, New Delhi, Orient Blackswan (former Orient Longman), 2009, 128-145.
- , *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective*, Malden, Basil/Blackwell, 2009.

- , “‘Bilingualing’ without schooling. The role of comprehensive education”, *Theoretical Perspectives on Comprehensive Education: The way forward*, eds. Heve Varenne and Edmund Gordon, New York, The Edwin Mellen Press, 2009, 187-216.
- , “Racializing the Language Practices of U.S. Latinos: Impact on their education”, *How the United States Racializes Latinos: White hegemony and its consequences*, ed. José Cobas, Joe Feagin, and Jorge Duany, New York, Routledge, 2009, 101-115.
- GARCÍA Ofelia, Nelson Flores & Massimiliano Spotti, “Language and Society: A Critical Poststructuralist Perspective”, *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Society*, eds. Ofelia García, Nelson Flores & Massimiliano Spotti, 2016, Oxford, Oxford UP, p. 545-551.
- GARCÍA Ofelia & Li Wei, *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- GARCÍA Ofelia & Leah Maso, “Where in the World is U.S. Spanish? Creating a space of opportunity for U.S. Latinos”, *Language and Poverty*, eds. Wayne Harbert, Sally McConnell-Ginet, Amanda Miller and John Whitman, Clevedon, Multilingual Matters, 2009, 78-101.
- GROSJEAN François, “Neurolinguists, Beware! The Bilingual Is Not Two Monolinguals in One Person”, *Brain and Language* 36, 1989, 3-15.
- GUESPIN Louis et Jean-Baptiste Marcellesi, “Pour la glottopolitique”, *Langages* 83, 21<sup>e</sup> année, 1986, 5-34.
- HELLER Monica & Alexandre Duchêne, *Language in Late Capitalism. Pride and Profit*, New York, Routledge, 2011.
- HELLER Monica & Bonnie McElhinny, *Language, Capitalism, Colonialism: Toward a Critical History*, Tonawonda, NY, University of Toronto Press, 2017.
- KROGSTAD Jens Manuel & Luis Noe-Bustamante, “Key facts about U.S. Latinos for National Hispanic Heritage Month”, *Pew Research Center*, September 10 2020. <https://pewrsr.ch/3emJJTR/>
- LABOV William, *Sociolinguistic Patterns*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972.
- , *The social stratification of English in New York City*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1966.
- , “Objectivity and Commitment in Linguistic Science: The Case of the Black English Trial in Ann Arbor”, *Language in Society* 11/2, 1982, 165-201.
- LAGARES Xoan, *Qual Política Linguística? Desafios Glotopolíticos Contemporâneos*, São Paulo, Parábola, 2018.
- LEE Euna, “Cambio De Código y Lenguaje Transnacional *En Killer Crónicas*”, *Hispania* 101/3, 2018, 446-457.

- LOPEZ Mark Hugo, Jens Manuel Krogstad & Jeffrey S. Passel, “Who is Hispanic?”, *Pew Research Center*, September 15 2020. <https://pewrsr.ch/3oaKcQF>
- LYOTARD Jean Francois, *The Postmodern Condition: a Report on Knowledge*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1984.
- MAKONI Sinfreed and Alastair Pennycook, Sinfree Makoni & Alastair Pennycook, “Disinventing and (Re)Constituting Languages”, *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 2005 2/3, 137-156.
- MORENO-FERNANDEZ Francisco, “Yo-yo Boing! Or Literature as Translingual Practice”, *Poets, Philosophers, Lovers*, eds. Frederick Luis Aldama and Tess O'Dwyer, Pittsburgh, PA, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020, 54-62.
- NARVAJA DE ARNOUX Elvira & Susana Nothstein (eds.), *Temas de glotopolítica: Integración regional sudamericana y panhispanismo*, Buenos Aires, Biblos, 2014.
- NARVAJA DE ARNOUX Elvira, “La Glotopolítica: transformaciones de un campo disciplinario”, *Lenguajes: teorías y práctica*, Buenos Aires, Secretaría de Educación, 2000, 3-27.
- OLIVEIRA DO ESPÍRITO SANTO Diogo & Kelly Barros, “A invenção do monolinguismo no Brasil: por uma orientação translíngue em aulas de ‘línguas’”, *Calidoscópio* 16/1, 2018, 152-162.
- ORTEGA Yecid, “Teacher, ¿Puedo hablar en español? A Reflection on Plurilingualism and Translanguaging Practices in EFL”, *Revista Profile: Issues in Teachers’ Professional Development* 21/2, 2019, 155-170.
- ORTEGA Lourdes, “The Study of Heritage Language Development From a Bilingualism and Social Justice Perspective”, *Language Learning* 70, 2020, 15-53.
- OTHEGUY Ricardo, Ofelia García & Wallis Reid, “A translanguaging view of the linguistic system of bilinguals”, *Applied Linguistics Review* 10/4, 2019, 625-651.
- , “Clarifying translanguaging and deconstructing named languages: A perspective from linguistics”, *Applied Linguistics Review* 6/3, 2015, 281-307.
- PAFFEY Darren & Clare Mar-Molinero. “Globalisation, linguistic norms and language authorities: Spain and the Panhispanic language policy”, *Spanish in the United States and other Contact Environments. Sociolinguistics, Ideology and Pedagogy* (Lengua y Sociedad en el Mundo Hispánico, 21), eds. Manuel Lacorte and Jennifer Leeman, Madrid, Iberoamericana/Vervuert, 159-173.
- PENNYCOOK Alastair, “Mobile times, mobile terms. The trans-super-poly-metro movement”, *Sociolinguistics. Theoretical Debates*, ed. Nikolas Coupland, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2016, 201-216.
- PETKOVA Ingrid, “Transculturation, Translanguaging and Junot Díaz’s Novel, The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao”, *Politeja* 60, 2019, 139-154.

- PROBST Lucena Maria Inêz y Angela Cristina Cardoso, “Translinguagem como recurso pedagógico: uma discussão etnográfica sobre práticas de linguagem em uma escola bilíngue”, *Calidoscópico* 16/1, 2018, 143-151.
- RIVERA Alfaro Silvia, “La planificación lingüística en la Universidad de Costa Rica: Política lingüística de lenguaje inclusivo de género, su ejecución y relación con propuestas de universidades hispanohablantes”, *Revista de Filología y Lingüística de la Universidad de Costa Rica* 45/2, 2019, 269-294.
- ROSA Jonathan, *Looking like a Language, Sounding like a Race: Raciolinguistic Ideologies and the Learning of Latinidad*, Oxford, Oxford UP, 2019.
- ROSA Jonathan & Nelson Flores, “Reimagining race and language. From raciolinguistics ideologies to a raciolinguistic perspective”, *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Race*, eds. H. Samy Alim, Angela Reyes and Paul V. Kroskrity, Oxford, Oxford UP, 2020, 90-107.
- , “Unsettling race and language: Toward a raciolinguistic perspective”, *Language in Society* 46/5, 2017, 621-647.
- SHANKAR Shalini & Jillian R. Cavanaugh, “Language and Materiality in Global Capitalism”, *Annu. Rev. Anthropol* 41, 2012, 355-369.
- TRUDGILL Peter, *Sociolinguistics: An introduction to language and society*, London, Penguin Books, 1995.
- URCIOLI Bonnie, *Exposing Prejudice: Puerto Rican Experiences of Language, Race, and Class*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1996.
- VALDEZ Juan, “Language in the Dominican Republic: Between Hispanism and Panamericanism”, *A Political History of Spanish: The Making of a Language*, ed. José del Valle, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2013, 182-196.
- , *Tracing Dominican Identity, The Writings of Pedro Henríquez Ureña*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- WADE Peter, *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America*, London, Pluto Press, 2010.
- WEINREICH Uriel, William Labov and Marvin Herzog, *Empirical foundations for a theory of language change*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1968.
- WEI Li, *Translanguaging and Code-Switching: what’s the difference?*, May 9 2018, blog entry: <https://blog.oup.com/2018/05/translanguaging-code-switching-difference/>.
- , “Translanguaging as a Practical Theory of Language”, *Applied Linguistics* 39/1, 2018, 9-30.
- ZAVALA Virginia, “Hacia una apuesta etnográfica para la glotopolítica”, *Caracol* 20, 2020, 202-231. <http://www.revistas.usp.br/caracol/article/view/166167>.