


# Chapter 1

## Introduction: Interrogating Race and Racism in Postsecondary Language Classrooms

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### ABSTRACT

*The introductory chapter interrogates race and racism in postsecondary language classrooms by mainly exploring Critical Race Theory, raciolinguistics, and Critical Language and Race Theory to examine race, racism, and racialization, as well as intersectionality between language and race, language and ideology, language and identity, and race and pedagogy. Chapter 1 discusses the importance of these theoretical frameworks, their integration with one another, and the connections of these frameworks with the volume, explores the links of language with ideology and identity, investigates seven antiracist and decolonial pedagogies (i.e., translanguaging pedagogy, multilingual pedagogy of writing, plurilingual approach, translanguaging, culturally responsive, relevant, and sustaining pedagogies, critical language awareness pedagogy, and multiliteracies pedagogy), and calls for action on combatting racism in higher education language classrooms to advance racial equity and enact linguistic and social justice.*

This chapter discusses the intersectionality between language and race, language and ideology, and language and identity, as well as calling for antiracist, decolonial pedagogies in language education. The first section introduces the concepts of “race,” “racism,” and “racialization.” It then discusses Critical Race Theory (CRT), raciolinguistics, and other conceptual orientations (e.g., cohesive theory of race and Critical Language and Race Theory), as well as their integration with one another, links to this volume, and critiques of CRT. In the second section, the intersection of language and ideology is explored. The chapter turns to the examination of the interplay of language and identity in its third section. The last section explores race and pedagogy by discussing seven key antiracist and anti-oppressive pedagogies in the field.

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## **LANGUAGE AND RACE**

From Quijano's (2000) "coloniality of power" [i.e., superiority versus inferiority based on power relations and social hierarchies (Maldonado-Torres, 2007)] to "coloniality of language" referring to linguistic power relations (Veronelli, 2015, p. 113), English has become a "colonial language" (Kachru, 1986, p. 5) and a "language for oppression" (Kachru, 1986, p. 13). With a colonial history and as an imperial legacy, English has created a hegemonic construct that assumes monolingualism and monoculturalism as frames of reference (Kiczkowiak & Lowe, 2018). Language is raced and race is languaged (Alim et al., 2016). Race and language are historically interweaved and have co-constructed to subordinate racialinguistically minoritized people (Hudley, 2016). Language and race embrace language and racism, and language and racialization (Alim et al., 2020), as well as entailing "racial politics" (Alim, 2016b, p. 36). Roth-Gordon (2016) summarizes that deep-rooted racism and the disenfranchised class "cannot afford to ignore language as a critical resource for the construction of racial meaning" (Alim, 2016a, p. 27). There has also been awareness of the link between race and language in non-English languages (Talbur & Stewart, 1999).

## **Race, Racism, and Racialization**

### **Race**

DuBois (1989) declares that "the problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line" (p. 29). Hesse (2016) contends that "[R]ace is not in the eye of the beholder or on the body of the objectified"; it is "an inherited western, modern-colonial practice of violence, assemblage, superordination, exploitation, and segregation... demarcating the colonial rule of Europe over non-Europe" (p. viii). Condon (2007) manifests that the society is structured and stratified based on how people are raced. Race is not isolated from the setting where it was produced — colonialism (Esch et al., 2020); race has been used to justify colonialism as "a by-product," "an intrinsic part," and "part of the intestines of empire" (Pieterse, 1990, p. 223).

### **Racism**

"Racism is a global White supremacy and is itself a political system, a particular power structure of formal and informal rule, privilege, socioeconomic advantages, and wealth and power opportunities" (Mills, 1997, p. 3). Consequently, racism obstructs "our liberal democratic ethos" (Hochschild, 1984, p. 3). Hudley (2016) suggests that "racism-based language is one of the last acceptable forms of racism" (p. 361). Alim (2016a) argues that instead of "erasing race," scholars should make joint efforts to eradicate "all forms of language-based racism and discrimination" (p. 27). There are different types of racism as categorized by different scholars. According to Hudley (2016), racism takes the forms of internalized racism (e.g., Racially minoritized people doubt their cultures' value influenced by the distorted information conveyed to them), personally mediated racism (i.e., biased perceptions and stereotypic assumptions based on race), and institutional racism (at the societal, governmental, or global level). Following Kubota and Lin (2009), there are institutional/structural racism and epistemological racism (based on epistemological knowledge that values White culture).

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