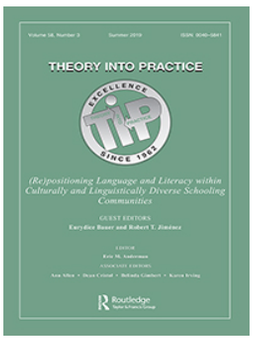

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(Re)Positioning in the Englishes and (English) Literacies of a Black Immigrant Youth: Towards a *Transraciolinguistic* Approach

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(Re)Positioning in the Englishes and (English) Literacies of a Black Immigrant Youth: Towards a *Transraciolinguistic* Approach

Increasing evidence confirms that multilingual and multiethnic English-speaking students face challenges with Englishes and English literacies when they migrate between their home countries and the United States. These challenges faced by immigrant and transnational students involve their dialects, accents, and communication styles, which lead them to question their capacity to speak English appropriately and grapple with what it means to be successful users of English literacy. Although examinations of these students' Englishes and literacies often centralize language, it is not often that race and language are equally foregrounded to illustrate the effects of both elements in the literate practices of these youth, many of whom are students of color. This article draws on positioning theory to describe how a Black immigrant English-speaking adolescent undergoes shifts in her experiences that (re)position her as a literate user of Englishes. I illustrate how the individual and global analyses recommended by a raciolinguistic perspective *reflected Jaeda's development of a* transraciolinguistic *approach that allowed her to persist with a sense of agency. Implications for teachers, educators, researchers are outlined.*

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Recent scholarship has proposed a raciolinguistic perspective to show how foundational forms of governance in society have developed and (mis)represented conaturalized discourses of race and language in ways that adversely represent the literate abilities of students (Rosa & Flores, 2017). Key arguments underlying this work point to the need for individual analyses of students' literate practices to occur in the context of the broader global

perceptions by which they are surrounded, perceptions that systematically dictate how racial and linguistic structures function together to maintain (perceptions of) literate inequities. Individual-to-global analyses that examine how linguistic practices are racialized in literacy both at the individual and global level can prove critical to this process considering the reification of structures of government in literacy curricular that continue to overlook the legitimate literacies of underrepresented youth (Rosa & Flores, 2017). Analyses such as these that show how students' literate practices at the micro-level are connected to hegemonic perceptions about racialized language at the macro-level, present opportunities to challenge deficit notions of underrepresented youth that tend to consistently question students' linguistic competence and sense of self (Rosa, 2016; Rosa & Flores, 2017).

Using elements of positioning theory as a tool for individual-to-global analyses based on the rationale described, I illustrate the ways in which a Black immigrant English-speaking student's (re) positioning of (and by) self and others, influenced her literate uses of Englishes and its corresponding raciolinguistic ideologies as she transitioned across Jamaica and the United States. I chose to focus on Jaeda because individual analyses of students' literate practice that foreground the influence of race in language tend to concentrate on the English and Spanish linguistic varieties of African American and Latino/a students. On the contrary, examinations of the literate practices of other student populations of color, namely immigrant and transnational Black students, who also speak their own English vernaculars or languages and whose linguistic practices are also significantly racialized, have been more focused on "linguicism" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988, p. 13). By emphasizing linguicism, that is, the power and privilege that certain languages and linguistic registers receive while inadvertently minimizing the equal role of race in examining the literate practices of such students, researchers overlook elements about the ways in which their literate practices are racialized. Using positioning theory to demonstrate how Jaeda is positioned based on her racialized Englishes as she interacts with others with literacy can illustrate how Jaeda's sense of agency with Englishes in her literate practice acted as a buffer against the hegemonic governance structures that wished to define her.

A Raciolinguistic Perspective

A raciolinguistic perspective illustrates how foundational forms of governance in society have conaturalized discourses of race and language to negatively represent the literate abilities of racialized populations (Rosa & Flores, 2017). Through this process, historical and contemporary societal forms of governance (in)advertently use perceptions of thinking based on connections of race to language to determine who should be treated in certain ways within the academic system. These perceptions of thinking—raciolinguistic ideologies—are such that the "linguistic practices of racialized populations are systematically stigmatized regardless of the extent to which these practices might seem to correspond to standardized norms" (Rosa & Flores, 2017, p. 3). Such ideologies also draw from the notion of the "white gaze" that sanctions the dominant white perspective as the legitimate view by which the linguistic practices of racialized communities should be judged (Flores & Rosa, 2015, pp. 150-151). In doing so, a raciolinguistic perspective proposes that the use of structures at both global and local levels be connected to examine and counteract deficit notions that racialize speakers of certain linguistic repertoires regardless of whether they conform to standardized linguistic repertoires historically privileged by whites (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Five key elements have been established as central to the goals of a raciolinguistic perspective (Rosa & Flores, 2017, p. 3). The first element emphasizes the focus on colonial histories, highlighting the ways in which projected European subjects and the languages of these subjects have been deemed superior to racialized non-European "objects" and to the linguistic repertoires developed by these objects. The second element focuses on the ways that perceptions of racialized language derive from

the privileging of white listeners as superior, both at the individual and the organizational and institutional levels, resulting in practices such as "linguistic profiling" (Baugh, 2003, p. 3). The third element highlights how relationships are developed between linguistic and racial forms—"twinning" —such that, together, they hold certain cultural values that are inextricable from one's sense of being a person in ways that come to foreground the experience of being racialized as opposed to viewing racialization as acting on discrete and examinable language entities external to self (p. 11). The fourth component notes the significance of centralizing race as a unit of analysis beyond the US context and as equally important as constructs such as class, gender, ethnicity in examinations of the conaturalization of race and language for furthering research on intersectionality. The fifth component reiterates the need to shift the focus away from how racialized populations modify their linguistic practices and, instead, to equally identify the ways in which dominant white perspectives are complicit in reifying colonial practices that use conaturalization of race and language to dominate academic and other institutions.

Positioning

The theory of positioning focuses on situating people's cognitive processes within the social and historical contexts of their reasoning. Positioning suggests that it is not only social stimuli that influence an individual's social behavior but that there are also formal rules of *moral reasoning* used by individuals to reflect beliefs and practices based on what individuals believe to be their rights or duties. These rights and duties typically evolve in the local context based on rules of moral reasoning affecting beliefs and practices of individuals in that context. In turn, the rights and duties to which individuals subscribe based on positioning determine whether they will perform an action, reflect a certain belief, or feel constrained to reflect certain beliefs and actions based on the moral reasons that govern a given context (Harré, Moghaddam, Cairnie, Rothbart, & Sabat, 2009).

Regardless of the rights and duties to which an individual subscribes, positioning theory maintains that it is meanings, functioning as social acts, and often overtly noted in the form of speech, that are ascribed to moral reasoning based on *rights and duties* that determine interactions between materials and persons who carry these meanings. The particular meaning delegated to interactions in a particular situation comes to bear significance for that particular context. Thus, individuals may be *prepositioned* (i.e., judged to have a certain character or competence) and then *positioned* (i.e., assigned, acquire, seize, withdraw, delete, take up certain rights and duties) based on moral reasoning in a given context that represents meanings for that context. What results is the distribution and redistribution of rights and duties by and across individuals where rules of moral reasoning at the macro-level of society continuously interact with micro-level rights and duties impacting actions and beliefs of the individual. A myriad of interactions across a myriad of individuals results in numerous representations of interactions that can be thought of as *storylines*, each occurring simultaneously based on rules and duties governing an individual's actions and beliefs in a situation, that is, their position. In turn, individuals may decide to respond positively or negatively to being positioned by a local context in a given way based on whether they believe they have claims to certain rights or to duties as governed by their moral reasoning at a given time (Harré et al., 2009).

Examining Race and Language at the Individual and Global Level in Jaeda's Englishes Through Positioning

Positioning theory, as a construct that considers how formal rules of moral reasoning based on society come to influence the actions of individuals based on what they believe to be are their rights and duties, is particularly suited to

consolidating global and individual discourses of racialized language as proposed by a raciolinguistic perspective (Rosa & Flores, 2017). I decided on positioning theory in my search for a mechanism to explain the complexities in Jaeda's discussions about her Englishes and their connections to race. By the same token, the premises of positioning theory and a raciolinguistic perspective also guided how I further conceptualized, (re)appropriated, and drew upon discursive resources for analyzing Jaeda's case.

In keeping with the goals of a raciolinguistic perspective, applying positioning theory in individual-to-global analyses of students who use Englishes and are racialized based on their languages can: (a) reflect how they are prepositioned when using these Englishes, (b) illuminate rights and duties that they assert when (re)positioned based on race or their use of English, (c) show the global factors influencing their prepositioning and (re)positioning, and (d) illustrate positive or negative responses demonstrated by students to being prepositioned and (re)positioned. Through this process, it is possible to help students (of color) challenge linguistic and racial misrepresentations in their literate abilities at both individual and global levels.

To show how racialization of students based on language in literate practice occurs through positioning, I analyze excerpts from Jaeda's semistructured interview responses that depict how racialization of Jaeda's Englishes functioned in her literate practice as she interacted with her mother, peers, and teachers. Jaeda, a biracial 19-year-old who classifies as Black, was a newly accepted college student and part of an IRB-approved study conducted with 10 Black English-speaking immigrant and transnational adolescents from the Caribbean over the period of one year (2016–2017). As a former transnational student, Jaeda was born in the US and first moved to Jamaica when she was six months old. Thereafter, she traveled between the US and Jamaica until age 14 and has assumed primary residence as well as functioned as an immigrant student in the US since then. Throughout this period of consistent transition, Jaeda lived with her Jamaican mother and sister. She reported no communication with, or knowledge of, her father, except that he was white. Her Englishes include Jamaican (English-based) Creole,[1] Standard Jamaican English,[1] and Standard American English.

Using Jaeda's interview excerpts, I now present two analytical storylines in turn, each forming the basis for illustrating how analysis through positioning theory reflects the co-occurrence of race and language in Jaeda's Englishes and literacies at both individual and global levels.

Storyline I: Jaeda's Positioning in Interactions With Her Mother

In the interview Excerpt One (Appendix A) and the accompanying storyline that follows (Figure 1), Jaeda discusses her interactions with and about her mother that reflect her mother's previous and current use of Englishes, as well as her mother's expectations for Jaeda's Englishes. Based on the excerpt, and as illustrated in Figure 1, Jaeda's conversations with me show that she prepositions herself and her mother as conforming citizens who believe it to be their right and duty to acquire competence with "proper English literacy" and other forms of language proficiency. The assigned duty that Jaeda believes she has to learn to speak better languages was not present when Jaeda was in elementary school where her mother simply disregarded the

[1] **Englishes**: The term *Englishes* refers to the many different varieties of English that represent a plurality, variation, and change within the English language as a norm (Kachru, 1992). Englishes represent the interweaving of both standardized (e.g., Standard American English) and nonstandardized (e.g., African American English) forms. I use *nonstandardized Englishes* (e.g., African American Vernacular English, Jamaican Creole, Trinidadian English-lexicon Creole) here to refer to Englishes that do not adhere to what has been determined to be a Standard English within a given context. Linguists refer to these variations as dialects or New Englishes (Kirkpatrick & Deterding, 2011), and to their counterparts, what I and others have labeled, *standardized Englishes*, as those that have been typically adopted for use in English literacy classrooms (e.g., Standard Jamaican English, Trinidadian Standard English, Standard American English).

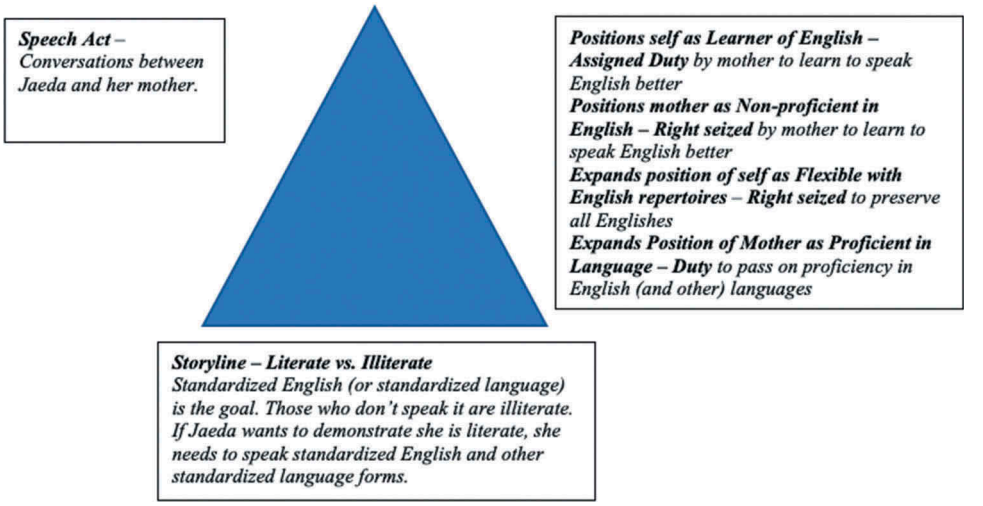

Figure 1. Story-Line I: Jaeda's positioning in interactions with her mother.

bullying from her peers as Jaeda's denial of her personhood. Yet, this duty is ascribed when Jaeda's mother takes up the right to learn to speak English "better" and in ways that she believes will give Jaeda opportunity, such as her expectation for Jaeda to learn Spanish and Mandarin just as she has. In turn, Jaeda takes up the assigned duty of needing to develop her English proficiency in ways that will mirror what her mother believes to be "proper" forms of English. These forms of English resemble the British Standard English with which her mother has become preoccupied, and deviate from the Standard Jamaican English from which Jaeda's mother has shifted away. Jaeda takes up this assigned duty in keeping with the positioning by her mother, which is aligned with Jaeda's mother's own repositioning of herself as a "proper English speaker."

In keeping with the elements of a raciolinguistic perspective (Rosa & Flores, 2017), although there is no explicit reference to race in Jaeda's descriptions of her interactions with her mother throughout the entire interview, Jaeda's repositioning of her mother as a legitimate English speaker, which occurs only when her mother ascribes to the British Standardized English use, from which she cannot "unfortunately" detach her Jamaican accent, reflects that her mother has come to privilege standardized English over Jamaican Creolized English during her residence in Britain. This repositioning seems to align with the imposition of colonial history on the perceptions of Jaeda's mother who, much like Rosa and Flores (2017) suggested, realizes and reconstructs her Englishes based on the "white listening subject" (p. 7) to which she is exposed in Britain. This repositioning by Jaeda's mother, based on perceptions of the white listening subject, who, it must be noted, would have likely been minimally present in the Jamaican context, mirrors Jaeda's repositioning in response to her struggles with the bullying that she faces when exposed to the white listening subject in the United States. Though neither Jaeda nor her mother seem to be aware, it is when the projected standardized Englishes of white European subjects eventually become perceived as superior that they both experience racialization as non-European "objects." As this takes place, Jaeda and her mother's repositioning occurs in such a way as to create the feeling that there is a duty and a right to develop a personhood that they believe will help them gain acceptance based on their adherence to standardized English norms —"white gaze".

Meanwhile, unbeknownst to Jaeda, the ways in which she positions her mother based on the duties that her mother takes up to please the white listening

subject influence her own positioning of self from the very beginning of her life with language. The unspoken language of Jaeda's elementary school institution also plays a concurrent role in Jaeda's positioning of her mother as it inadvertently reinforces the message from her mother that as a Black student, her language practices must be presented in a certain way—standardized—if she is to be free from bullying, quite opposite to the message that she receives from her mother before her mother becomes ultimately defined by the white listening subject as she, too, attempts to disregard the linguistic repertoires that define her as an object. Notwithstanding, Jaeda deploys metalinguistic understanding, that is, awareness and control of linguistic elements (Herdina & Jessner, 2002) in her use of English across contexts to expand her positioning as a flexible user of her Englishes, able to determine when and where she will use these, and in doing so, attempts to position herself as subject. This repositioning of herself, a process that constitutes part of what I describe later as a *transraciolinguistic approach* (Smith, In Press) is an attempt by Jaeda to navigate the standardized English expectations of the dominant context of schooling institutions that prevent her from using her literate practices from the home comfortably in the school context.

Storyline II: Jaeda's Positioning in Interactions With Her Teachers and Peers

In the interview Excerpt Two (Appendix B) and accompanying storyline that follows (Figure 2), Jaeda discusses her interactions with and about her teachers and peers that reflect their expectations for Jaeda's Englishes at the elementary, middle, high school, and university levels. Based on the excerpt and as illustrated in Figure 2, Jaeda's conversations with me show that she prepositions herself as competent with English based on what she believes is her right to speak English as she has learned it as a child. However, this right is withdrawn, intentionally and unintentionally, by peers who bully her because her use of Jamaican English is different, by teachers who wish for her to conform to the ways of speaking (standardized) English honored by school, and further denigrated by the refusal of Black peers from Africa and America to allow her to find a sense of place among them in their Black student organizations. In turn, Jaeda's presence in an all-white school leads her to perceive it as her duty to develop proficiency with English literacies as a Black child who wishes to be positioned as proficient by peers, teachers, and those in schools. She maintains that this duty is important when she transitions to the university level, but then notices that her race also has something to do with the way in which she is "supposed to sound" as a Black person, but does not. In much the same way that Jaeda becomes flexible in Storyline I by deciding to use her Jamaican Englishes at home, Jaeda determines that she needs to adopt a dual nature in Storyline II by positioning herself to use the Englishes that she thinks are needed in academic places while also searching for a place that will accept her own Jamaican uses of Englishes without disowning her Blackness.

In keeping with the elements of a raciolinguistic perspective (Rosa & Flores, 2017), Jaeda's positioning and repositioning of herself as an English speaker and a Black person in Storyline II are first independent, and later, appear to merge. As with the process of positioning in Storyline I, although Jaeda unintentionally and consistently asserts her right to use her Jamaican English and accent throughout elementary and middle school where she co-exists with other diverse populations who also legitimately appear to do the same, her use of this English is not sanctioned by her Black or Brown American and Latino peers, nor is it validated by her teachers. In fact, in line with the argument by Rosa and Flores (2017), the English that is sanctioned emerges from the perception of racialized language where her peers and teachers privilege white listeners and their standardized American English as superior, thus "raciolinguistically profiling" (p. 16) Jaeda. This denigration against Jaeda's Jamaican English by peers who are also themselves racialized and linguicized as objects, globally reflects the ways in which colonial practices are perpetuated in these

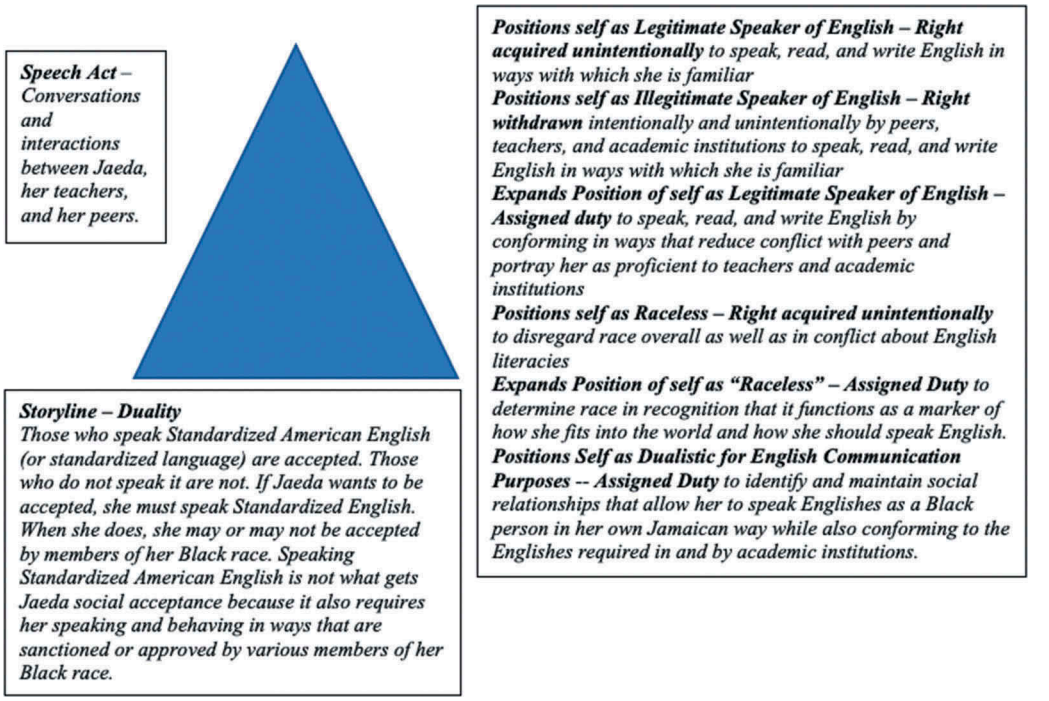

Figure 2. Story-Line II: Jaeda's positioning in interactions with her teachers and peers.

individualized spaces (Rosa & Flores, 2017). Jaeda's peers implicitly project European subjects and their freedom to use languages as legitimate when they adopt and appropriate the practices of their former colonizers to also linguicize Jaeda's Englishes while inadvertently racializing her. Through her peers' actions, Jaeda becomes the nonconforming object.

In turn, Jaeda's personhood is affected, both by her peers' bullying in middle school and by her recognition that she is not socially accepted as a Black person even when she uses the standardized American Englishes that she has been asked to use for years. As Rosa and Flores (2017) noted, relationships developed between linguistic and racial forms such that together they hold certain cultural values are inextricably linked to one's sense of being a person. By failing to find acceptance of her language in her younger years, Jaeda feels alienated as a person, stating that these were the "worst years" of her life. By also failing to find social acceptance as a Black person who observes that her Jamaican linguistic repertoire is not accepted in a white space and that her standardized American English is not accepted in Black spaces, it is Jaeda's sense of self that remains under attack and not merely the Englishes and race that she happens to represent. This is evident when Jaeda states that she has never identified as Black and indicates that she wishes to find out "what" she is. Jaeda maintains this position despite seemingly and generally being "accepted" by whites in her older years when she presents standardized American English in white spaces, as she indicates throughout her narrative—white gaze. This position is also held despite Jaeda's appreciation for her close white friend who accepts all of her Englishes.

Though Jaeda remains positioned as a nonconforming object until she becomes enrolled in high school and though the entire reference to her childhood and early teenage years make no

reference to race—"racelessness"—she eventually observes the conaturalization of race and language in her early interactions and conversations at the university level. Just as Rosa and Flores (2017) have noted, these interactions consistently required Jaeda to modify her language as an individual, which then influenced what she believed was her duty to restructure her English to suit academic settings. Yet, Jaeda's interactions with Black African and American speakers reflect that there is more to this than merely changing her English practices to suit the white listening subject. In fact, from Jaeda's observation, her American and African peers, supposedly positioned as "Black listening objects," also seem to appropriate practices that reflect the tone of the white listening subject. In other words, much like the white listening subject, Jaeda's peers position her in ways that suggest that they have the power to determine whether her Blackness is legitimate enough to allow her to use English in the way she does. In doing so, her peers move beyond mere conformity to, and acknowledgement of, the dominant English, culture, and race, unwittingly legitimizing the superiority of their Blackness to use both standardized and nonstandardized Englishes as superior while simultaneously withdrawing Jaeda's rights to do the same. Correspondingly, they inadvertently render inferior, Jaeda's Blackness to position herself as a literate user of these Englishes.

By being positioned based on these experiences, Jaeda eventually realizes that the African and American Englishes of her peers, standardized or nonstandardized, as well as their Blackness, are presumed to be superior to her Blackness, literacies, and Englishes. But she also implicitly receives the message that the identity of having African and American Englishes or African and American Blackness, whatever these are, are superior to being a Black Caribbean person, whatever this might be. Inadvertently, this positioning of Jaeda enlightens her to the "metaracial" (Martinot, 2003, p. 130) nature of the racialization of her language, which, because it is largely socially constituted, leads her to search for another space where both the Blackness and Jamaican Englishes in her personhood find safety while she maintains the requirements of academia for her literate use of standardized American English as a Black student. In adopting this duality, which represents part of what I later describe as Jaeda's reflection of a *transraciolinguistic approach* (Smith, In Press), Jaeda sacrifices part of her personhood—her natural ways of speaking Jamaican Englishes and literacies to be accepted in the academic circle. Notwithstanding, she chooses, based on her "metacultural" (Sharifian, 2013, p. 5) understanding of the ways in which the association of her race and English transcend typical notions of these constructs within the cultural context of America, not to relinquish this part of her personhood to be accepted in social circles (i.e., Black American, African, white-dominant spaces) beyond the academy.

Towards a Transraciolinguistics Approach

Applying the work of Rosa and Flores (2017) that calls for studies to connect individual analyses of race and language in students' literate practice to the broader global hegemonic governance structures that define and impose perceptions of race and language on these practices, I have described concepts from positioning theory that can be used to undertake these analyses when considering the specific arguments proposed by a raciolinguistic perspective that operate in tandem with specific English language ideologies about standardized and nonstandardized Englishes. I then highlighted a number of ways in which positioning occurred in Jaeda's literate practice based on race and language while showing the corresponding individual and global elements related to this practice.

At this juncture, and as referenced earlier, I assert that the foregoing analyses reflect Jaeda's adoption of what I have come to refer to as a *transraciolinguistic approach* (Smith, In Press). This transraciolioguistic approach can be described as Jaeda's metalinguistic, metaracial, and metacultural understanding of her past experiences with race and language, and by extension, culture, to determine how to function effectively within non/academic settings in ways that do not

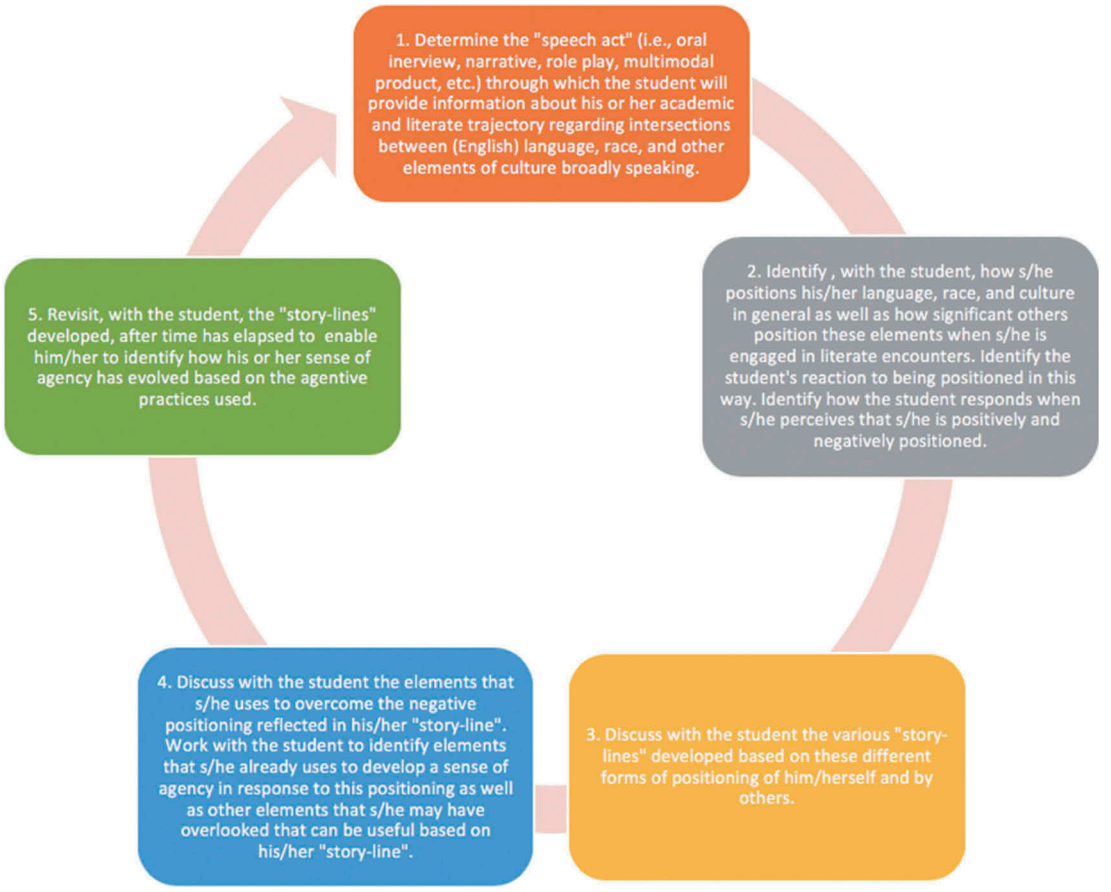

Figure 3. Facilitating a *Transraciolinguistic* Approach.

completely sacrifice her personhood. Specifically, Jaeda reflected a transraciolinguistic approach in the flexibility that she adopted as a young student in Storyline I and in the duality developed while retaining her personhood as an adolescent student in Storyline II. Developing a transraciolinguistic approach enabled Jaeda to make sense of her experiences and continue to be agentive in her progress as a student, which has been reflected in Jaeda's recent enrollment as a member of the Caribbean Student Association at her university.

A transraciolinguistic approach can be fostered by teachers and educators of students such as Jaeda who wrestle with a sense of personhood, even while they seem to succeed academically as individuals, using the process in Figure 3. Analyses such as these can be adopted by researchers to better understand how Black immigrant and transnational students, based on their individual and unique trajectories, are positioned in relation to race and language.

Those who wish to elicit such an approach in addressing the literate practices of Black transnational and immigrant youth of color, such as Jaeda, can also be guided by the following questions to develop storylines that help students to identify elements that present a sense of agency in their development of a transraciolinguistic approach.

1. To what degree does the student/teacher/educator/researcher identify and understand the student's racial and linguistic

repertoires, their intersections, and by extension, overall cultural identity? How do others' perceptions influence these repertoires and identity?
2. What steps have been taken by the student to adjust his or her personhood in non/academic settings based on the identification and understanding of the student's racial and linguistic repertoires, their intersections, and by extension, overall cultural identity?
3. What steps have been taken by the teacher/educator/researcher to help the student adjust his or her personhood in academic and social settings based on the identification and understanding of the student's racial and linguistic repertoires, their intersections, and by extension, overall cultural identity?
4. To what degree do the previous steps allow the students to retain a sense of personhood that is aligned with both his or her identity, both racially and linguistically?

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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Appendix A Jaeda's Excerpt One

"My mom's from Jamaica. She's Jamaican. Her accent is Jamaican English. She lived, like, 20 years in England, 19 years in Jamaica. But the thing is, me and my sister, we have language problems because my mom had a very thick accent like her family, so we started talking Patois all the time all the time, so then we had to take English as a second language classes all the way up to middle

school. Basically, like, I feel I was speaking English [in elementary school], but you know, Jamaican, broken Jamaican; kids bullied me and my sister all the time. I would like, go home, cry about it because no one understands what I was saying. And my mom would say [back then], 'Maybe you start being yourself you don't have to worry about everybody else bullying you and stuff like that, just talk how, you know, we all talk how as a family' so I was like, 'No [laughter], not working.' So then, I don't know, I [later] transitioned in and out of three middle schools because with all the bullying, I had behavior problems, like me lashing out at people. I had a really big behavior problem in middle school. Yes, but back to my mom, now she hates sounding Jamaican. She became a proper person. She's very proper. She reads a lot and I think that is kind of changing her. She reads all the time and so, she carries herself at high level and she wants me to meet that level. She doesn't want me to speak down at this level [where I use Jamaican Creolized English]. She always wants me to learn different languages. She put her money aside for me to go back to China. She wants me to be fluent in Mandarin. I am working on language all the time because she wants me to speak Spanish and Mandarin at the same time. She knows Spanish, French, and something else. So now she pronounces her words; you'll never hear her speak like, broken [Jamaican English]; but you also hear the [Jamaican] accent. She sounds more American [now] but she still has problems with saying some difficult words. When I'm at home I speak totally different with the same [Jamaican] accent like my mom. Immediately. I can turn [my American accent] off and turn it on. I got used to that. So, when I'm at home, I am totally comfortable."

Appendix B Jaeda's Excerpt Two

"I went to an **elementary school** in east Dallas which had a lot of Black kids and Hispanic kids. There're very different types. Very diverse. So my teacher, she's white but she understands. She always worked with me on reading. It's called like reading rainbow. Oh. But they also pulled me out of the class in the middle of the day and said, 'Oh time for hour of English.' Ok, it was boring. I still remember how I did the keypad to spell out words and she said "No. That's not right." I fixed it and I still get it wrong and I'm going to do it in a test and still get it wrong. So, speaking was changing, but the writing was not. [We would do] Words lesson, she would always help me with the words because I would always spelled it in [British] English, like *color* for *colour*. Yeah, like everything was British. So yes, the elementary teachers helped a lot with that and then I got to middle school.

"Bullying was tough in **middle school**. I would speak and they were like, 'Say that word again … say that word again.' I hated it! I hated it! That was how it was in middle school. That was really the worst time of my life. My mom realized this because my grades started to drop, and I didn't want to go out of my room. I stayed in my room all the time because I don't want to talk to people, because I felt like they looked at me weird every time I say something. So, then I started to just try to talk like them, so like [pronounce] my words like now I'm talking now (using standardized American English). So, that's how I usually talk (laughs), I started to say things my way. But that didn't work. And that's how I went to so many middle schools. It was because of a lot of bullying. I went to two, three middle schools and then one high school. I am still considered problem child. And the school teachers [in middle school] weren't very helpful. They never said anything to me. Middle school, nothing. Nothing. They never suggested anything but in high school they suggested counseling. High school had counseling for lots of stuff.

"So yeah, in **high school** I started speaking differently because I was taught all-white high school. So, it was like, 'Ok, it's immediately I'm the one [Black] person that has to live with [being in an all-white school] all the time.' Ok, [so I thought], 'Let me change my voice in order to fit in, to make friends.' I had one [white] best friend and we're still friends till this day. But when I came

here [to the **university**], I was looking for other caring people' I didn't know anybody here—just like a brand-new life for me. [I thought] I can just be myself here and stop worrying about all the bad stuff. I didn't know about it and my roommate was African at the time and my mom said, 'Beware of her.' So, next thing I know, I was excluded from things [in the dorm] and [I was like,] 'This [bad treatment] can't be happening again.' So then, I ended up moving out at the end of December to a different room. I am no longer a friend to any of them. Some were white, some were African, and some were African American.

"White people, they are really cool all the time. Again, I am not the type of a typical Black person. Most people tell me, 'You're not Black.' I am still struggling to find what am I because my dad is white. But I didn't know him. I didn't know him whatsoever. I've always identified with being just Jamaican. But my best friend, who is white, she is very understanding. So, I've always felt comfortable around white people; I've never really had a problem too much, but African American people, that is my biggest problem. I also feel like the African Student Association, they stay with their own culture; white people, they're more curious—I should say some [of them]—about other different countries and cultures. But yea, I got there in the ASA with too many African people. I don't why I can't do this. They were like, 'You're very different.' They look at you funny. So I was like, 'I am not connected with this.' I took myself out of that association. And then the Black Student Association group, well they're very 'Black power,' so I was like 'no.' I don't fit in there. So now I know how to say something, and I guess if I say something different, people won't look at me. I'll correct myself immediately [if I say something wrong]. Like if I say like *rucksack*, that means *backpack*. I'll hurry up to correct myself. People look at me for a second but if people don't know, I don't call it out."

Additional Resources

1. Flores, N., & Rosa, J. (2015). Undoing appropriateness: Raciolinguistic ideologies and language diversity in education. *Harvard Educational Review, 85*(2), 149-171.

The article, written for researchers, allows insights into the ways in which raciolinguistic ideologies can be considered as a basis for applying positioning in a raciolinguistic perspective.

2. Kim, E. (2014). Bicultural socialization experiences of Black immigrant students at a predominantly white institution. *The Journal of Negro Education, 83*(4), 580-594.

The article, written for researchers and practitioners, allows insights into the ways in which Black immigrant students face challenges with socialization in relation to race and allows insights that can facilitate the fostering of a transraciolinguistic approach by teachers and educators.

3. Strand, S. (2012). The White British-Black Caribbean achievement gap: Tests, tiers and teacher expectations. *British Educational Research Journal, 38*(1), 75-101.

The article, written for researchers and practitioners, allows insights into the ways in which Black immigrant students face challenges with socialization in relation to race and allows for an understanding of how testing practices are reflected in this process.