Republic and Nation are just metro stations: Value, Language and Play in Urban France

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Introduction

In times of crises over economics, migration, and terrorism France asserts republican values to reaffirm national unity, strengthen national borders, and calm bourgeois anxieties. Yet as republican values are seen to be embodied in particular national symbols and linguistic forms, they become the values of empire (Negri 2000), silencing minority voices and narratives. Ann Stoler describes this as France’s “colonial aphasia” (2011), the lack of a verbal or a conceptual vocabulary for the colonial past. In contrast to this silence and forgetting, young people of diverse origins on France’s urban periphery are coming up with new words and new values to shape the post-colonial present. Turning words on their heads with the fluid use of multiple codes, they challenge the linguistic ideals of the French Republic - purity, clarity and universality – and her values of secularism, liberty, and fraternity. With provocative statements like “Republic and Nation are just metro stations” they show their exclusion from the ideals of the Republic, and question those values all together.

This literature review, as part of a larger ethnographic project which takes me from Amherst to Paris, examines language play as the construction of identities and the transgression of ideologies, through an exploration of the interconnections between literatures on national language ideologies, values, and literatures on student language play. It then examines literatures on schools as sites which connect values to linguistic forms, taking the opportunity to connect literature on France to American contexts. It explores the ideologies and governments of monoglossic or standardized language of the classroom, connecting these to larger social processes of value production and social differentiation, and the carnivalesque, joyous and disruptive expressions of students that counter a social order. More particularly, it asks how minority students in France create new forms of
expression to counter monoglossic language ideologies and social exclusion.

Language ideologies are a relatively recent field, drawing on work in socio-linguistic and anthropological research. Monoglossic or monoglot language ideologies are a large part of cultural exclusion, beginning with linguicism and discrimination against students for their variety, accent, or use of a language. Language ideologies in educational institutions further influence which students are perceived not just as speaking a good or a bad variety of a language but as smart or as dumb, good or bad students.

Additionally, ideologies inform the linguistic, educational policy and practice through language governmentality. Language governmentality develops the institutional and political functions of language ideology. Governmentality draws on the insights from post-colonial practices of language education, to reflect on the way language education is used to manage populations, how it is taught, policies of education, and restricting language use. This functions equally at the micro level of the classroom and the macro level of the statehouse, or Pearson's corporate headquarters.

This review places student language games in connection contrast with these institutional practices. There is a growing body of research on student hybrid language practices, within which we focus on transgressive and heteroglossic language, with a particular interest in French language practices. Student creativity operates within and against these ideologic constraints to construct new identities, social groups, communities, and ideologies. In this way it can range from an amusing game, the contradiction of authority, to the creation of a social identity or a political statement.

Putting these two bodies of literature in dialogue reveals the political force of student language practice. When we see how much work is accomplished by language ideology we see how much students are doing when they transgress it. When teachers enforce monolingual academic language, they are doing so within a set of beliefs, social investments, and social stratifications. When students speak with hybrid language, they may create new values and upend social strata. A language ideological framework shows not only processes of standardization but the joy and intelligence students display in these disruptive moments.
Methods

This review covers qualitative research, in particular ethnographic and theoretical texts. With the exception of key and theoretical texts they cover the years 2000 to 2015. Preliminary sources included edited volumes on the topics of language ideology and post-structuralist approaches research in multilingualism. These volumes were chosen as their editors or key authors are central to the field.

Searches were conducted at three intervals. Preliminary sources, database searches, and a bibliographic cross comparison between key texts and article searches. Databases searched were Language and Linguistics Behavior Abstracts (LLBA), Modern Language Association (MLA), Social Science Abstracts, and ERIC. Key words were: language, ideology, French, French & hip-hop, Verlan, education. Studies were initially sorted by a brief review of the abstract, and then chosen for either their illustration of key theories or for their development of these ideas in the context of student language or education. Key texts were either included in edited volumes or determined by frequency of citation.

Constraints were determined by feasibility, as well as in order to limit studies without great relevance. Constraints for edited volumes included publisher, quality and relevance of scholarship. Only edited volumes which were edited by major figures in the field and published by academic publishers such as Oxford or Routledge were included. Constraints for articles were inclusion in peer reviewed journals indexed in MLA, LLBA, or ERIC.

Materials were excluded after review of the abstract, or in some cases after review of the article if they did not offer a significant development of a theoretical model or application to education. Exclusion criteria included: very short duration ethnography, snapshot or short interview based methods; lack of original content; research did not clearly establish aims, conclusions, relevance; lack of connection to education. Due to lack of relevant search results, no quantitative studies were included.
Results

This overview will draw on three themes, 1) Language ideology, 2) Verlan and other heteroglot student language play, 3) Schools as sites for the production of values. Exploration of socio-linguistic and anthropological texts on the language of French schools and students is guided by Negri’s “critique of communication” and critique of values in *The politics of subversion* (1989) and *Empire* (2000).

This term “critique of communication” indicates both the bland violence of standardized institutional French, and ways in which students transform both language and values to engage in everyday resistance against practices which devalue their identities and intelligences. Negri’s critique suggests that language which asserts itself to be clear and universal is actually the site of imperialism, the imposition of a social order in the guise of a linguistic one.

Standard language that pretends to a scientific, transparent, meaning reflects instead the imperialist pretension to values that hold true over all times and places. Universal values, true for everyone in all places become a sort of metaphysical empire (Negri 2000). Against communication, language of faceless bureaucracy and power of unbounded values, students fight back with poetry and protest. They offer the nonsense words of Verlan, “crypto-ludic” communication (Goudailler 2002) that is the inverse of the impersonal lucidity of imperial prose. They refuse with the silence of strikes and solidarity.

Language ideology

Language ideology is the study of the way users of a language give social meaning to a particular linguistic code. This meaning has four essential components: it is constructed in the interest of a particular social group; it is multiple because societies are multiple; members have varying degrees of ideological knowledge, and ideologies mediate between social structures and forms of talk (kroskity ——). That is, saying something is “academic French” serves the interests of particular people, like teachers. However, “academic French” could also be devalued by other people, like poets. Some of whom, such as poetry professors, may know a lot about ideology while
others may know less, or less explicitly. Finally, these valuations of academic, poetic, expressive, or clear are not solely art but are used to construct relationships between social forms, institutions like schools, social stratifications. In this review, language ideological frameworks are employed to show the construction of a dominant, standardized version of language and the heterogeneity of student language that transgresses it.

Monoglossic language ideology can be generally divided into two types, Rationalism and Nationalism. (Baumann and Briggs 2000) The first, rationalism, is taken from a study of the enlightenment philosopher John Locke. It suggests an ideal of language as transparent sign, vehicle for individual perception and logic. Language should be clear, simple, and directly convey meanings, and any particularly beautiful, emotional, or compelling speech is suspect. It stands against poetry, but also against what he sees as religious authority, intertextuality and the authority of other texts, and historical-cultural transmission or the authority of groups. This is plainly reflected in the belief that academic language is referential, or primarily concerned with the naming of things and above all clear, neutral, and a personal achievement (Silverstein 1996) A related drive can be seen today in desires for politicians to “say it like it is”, reflecting personal beliefs and truths. (Hill 2000),

The second term in Baurman and Briggs (2000) is, nationalism, taken from their study of the German thinker Herder's notion of Volk. Language here is identified with a unique and homogenous national culture, one which reproduces itself through the processes of poetry, intertextuality, and transmission. Poetry is seen as reflecting deep cultural thought processes, while intertextuality and transmission reflect religious, textual, and cultural authority. Key is the idea of Volk, the people, who are imagined as the ideal speakers of the language, and the notion that language reflects deep cultural identity, thought, authority, and unity – but this national language is defined and enforced by elites and linguistic professionals. This implicit ideal Volk without real people is what we rely on when we say “French is a chic” language, using it to characterize all of the French culture, or “Arabic is violent”, reflecting our cultural fears, but also in much interpretativist anthropological research (Kroskerty 2000). This is also the explicit ideal when we talk about the imagined community of English speakers (Silverstein 2000), when we
enforce monolingual norms through “English only” education (Silverstein 1996) or the unification of the linguistic market (Blackledge 2003).

These different types of monoglossic language ideologies denaturalize academic language, showing the ways in which particular forms of language are standardized and then held up as languages of academic achievement (Silverstein 1996). It further allows us a way to understand how schools produce different types of value, through ways of constructing language as good, bad, educated, not educated (Rosa 2014), in a way that reflects social divisions even while it seems independent of the social situation of the speakers. Across opposing views of poetry, science, and differing epistemologies, they both offer a scientific, authoritative view of language that creates a role for scholars of language while endorsing the marginalization of women and workers. That is, the more monoglossic ideologies pretend to be neutral, or universal, the more they in fact reflect and even produce social difference.

Monoglot ideologies enforce unity, clarity, and nationality within a language, while Irvine & Gal's (2000) work on language ideology and language differentiation specifically examines how language ideologies operate to create difference. Three semiotic moves, iconization, recursivity, and erasure, are described in three diverse settings for the differentiation of language: politics in Macedonia, drawing colonial maps of Sengal, and Zulu ritual. Erasure presumes that the other is a homogenous group—evident when people call Africa a country. Iconization involves the transformation of indexical relationships to iconic ones, that seem to emanate from the souls of the described—slow speech becomes an icon of colonized people's laziness. Recursivity reinscribes external difference within a language—multilingual situations, such as language borrowing or register switching, are to be avoided within a language by strict insistence on monoglot purity.

Once ideological moves are invoked to create borders between linguistic repertoires, Governmentality enforces these norms in policy, pedagogy, and practice. Pennycook (2002) and Tollefson (2002) suggest that even multilingual education polices reflect monolingual ideals—the identity of language, nation, and culture. According to Flores, (2010) even Critical Applied Linguists still maintain the fiction that there is a truth of language, and thus participate in
Despite critiques of ideology, purity, or the desire to revitalize languages, many linguists still maintain the idea that there is such a thing as one language, reifying practice as national or language identity to the detriment of the communities they serve as researchers or as teachers. Flores (2013) traces the concept of language governmentality from Foucault beginning with the projects of colonial empires to impose language and culture, to the direction of heritage or revitalization efforts, and finally to the re-imposition of colonial projects within the colonizing country. These projects are presented as for the good of marginalized populations, but serve to further regulate and marginalize. For Flores, separation and organization of populations is the chief aim of these policies, not language or education but the protection of the population from internal degradation.

Thie French case in particular is summarized in Anthony Loge's (1998) work on French language ideology, which suggests French views itself primarily as a rational or clear language, according to Stewart (2012) French people actively participate in a drive to standardization and correctness. They are even in love with their linguistic norm. However, this norm is not natural but institutional. Renee Balibar's (1985) work focuses on the history and the imposition of standard French. Her term, *le français des instituteurs*, can be translated in two ways which reflect both the tools of its implementation, as “the French of schoolteachers”, and the tools of its power, as “the french of institutions”. Standardization was implemented through the public school system, through a nationalizing system that centralized teacher training and prohibited teachers from working in their local communities, while emphasizing a standard French for national and cultural unity. It gained its power through the economic necessities of print capitalism in the emerging bourgeois society, the need to negotiate with and participate in civil institutions, and expanding employment in the civil, and later in the service, sectors. Although recent work looks at the exclusion of people of color from national narratives (Dotson-Renta 2014, Smith 2014), few have addressed the role that rationalist or referentialist language ideologies play in marginalization.

**Verlan**

Verlan is a language variety spoken primarily by students of color in the Banlieue or impoverished
neighborhoods on the outskirts of major cities in France. It is characterized by apocope, or loss of final vowels, syllable inversion, truncation, and by language borrowing. So for example, if French “J’aime bien prendre le metro” or I like to take the metro, would become the verlan “Je kif prend’ le tromé”. This has links to both working class French traditions, colonial histories, and modern global francophone identities.

Historical views of Verlan connect it to French traditions. Goudailler, author of the first dictionary of Verlan, moves beyond a descriptive approach to trace the historical lineage of Urban French in what he describes as “argotologie” (2002) or slang-ology. First he details the crypto-ludic aspects of slang: crypto as its surface meaning can hide transgressive information, ludic for the pleasure in its use. Contemporary slang is traced back to practices of the 15th century, making Verlan a distinctly French phenomenon rather than a language of international contact. While the fact that Verlan has a firm grounding in French tradition is an important counter to those who write off its speakers as hoodlums and poor learners of French, Goudailler may move too far away from a notion of hybridity, and does not give enough significance to the intercultural and interlanguage aspects of its current vocabulary or the ideas it indexes.

Descriptive linguistic views of Verlan emphasize these formal aspects of the language, occasionally using poetic terms like apocope but more often relying on insulting terms like “the French Pig Latin”. Davis’ (2004) article of that name is a superior example of how descriptive linguistic approaches can combine with insulting presumptions. A not particularly skilled analysis of Verlan along with a reductive account of its qualities that ignores social and political use. Kent (2009) offers a more detailed linguistic study of the use of and review of research on Verlan from a historical perspective, however, she limits analysis to a simplistic, reductionist view that Verlan is a vehicular language or creole. The fact that Verlan does not exhibit any of the spelling or grammatical regularizations characteristic of Haitian or other French creoles—in fact it even conjugates borrowed Creole words according to traditional French grammar—suggests that racialization plays a larger factor in these analyses than the grammar they describe.

In these studies, methods of data collection were limited to surveys and word recognition tests, so the social contexts were largely absent from this study of Verlan. Sociolinguistic approaches can
offer a more nuanced view, but may also repeat nefarious stereotypes. Nicolas (2005) offers an implicit valorization of the practice through the application of sophisticated poetic and linguistic terminology and an explicit appreciation of its inventiveness. However, there is a deficit understanding of the context of this linguistic form, seen as reflecting primarily poverty, violence, and the “social fracture” of the title. Nicolas does not explain the use or the goals of this creativity – it remains only a reflection, not a resistance, rebellion, or re-imagination.

Doran's (2004, 2007) work provides more nuanced analyses of Verlan in the Suburbs. Verlan is characterized by a more forceful and guttural pronunciation, the processes of syllable inversion, and the incorporation of loan words. Her work is one of few to emphasize the verbal images of Verlan, its social aspects as verbal art, as students build friendships while describing old bourgeois men as “fromage blanc”. Doran (2004) emphasizes the individual process of identity negotiation, with a stronger emphasis on class and sociability. Doran (2007) looks at the discourse surrounding the banlieue and narratives of national belonging. Slolutsky and Black (2008) note that students can “tag” identities through language borrowing in Verlan, even if they are not fluent in their heritage language. Further she notes that Verlan is becoming more commonplace as an urban slang-- bourgeois students are using it to give intensity to their language “vit a donf” or a poetic, “live fast die young”.

The evolving cultural context and linguistic life of the French banlieues is described in anthropological work by Chantal Tetreault, who notes that earlier sociolinguistic studies repeat many of the same tropes that plagued discussions of African American Vernacular English in the 60’s: a focus on “authentic language” produced by masculine, violent, working class subjects and a predominant focus on semantic invention. By contrast she draws on critical sociolinguistic studies on “language crossing” (Rampton 2009) and work on language, gender, and authenticity (Bucholtz 2003) to create a more nuanced understanding of the language of the banlieues that centers on the linguistic identities of young women. She also expands the focus of analysis from lexicon to register, in analysis of students’ appropriation of French TV host register (2009). Language games are also spaces for the creation of new values in her analyses of conflict; in of mocking of parental names as ways of navigating French and Algerian value systems (2009) and creating intimacy through performing aggression (2010). Her more recent work focuses on the
ways students use language to negotiate their national belonging, to create communities and appropriate spaces (2013, 2015).

Other recent work connects political imaginaries to fluid uses of language, from Bertho’s (2008) exploration of “linguistic battlegrounds”, to Dotson-Renta’s (2014) exploration of French hip hop, they often focus on exceptional political and artistic events. However, Le Nevez (2009) argues that plurilingualism is already a part of the French linguistic landscape – one of strong language norms that obscure the “realites metisses”, the hybridity of everyday speech and life. Lunch in a kebab shop offers multiple modalities and multiple languages, SMS slang, music, speech, in a pleasant banality that belies the political struggles around plurilingualism as heterogeneity to be celebrated or non-integration to be feared. Despite being ordinary, Le Nevez notes that language and plurilingualism is political, not just social: a site of activism, not merely a vehicle for it.

**Values**

If language is a site of activism, schools are privileged theaters for both the implementation of linguistic ideologies and their transgression. They are sites for conflict over values, anxieties about national character, and the creation of new identities. This section also allows us to connect the exploration of Verlan to linguistic and educational contexts in other major urban centers, in a review of critical linguistic studies that travels from France to England, Canada, and the United States.

Kathleen Hall (2002) in a study of Sikh students in Leeds, England, notes that schools are sites for conflicts over cultural anxieties and the politics of representation. Hall notes that major sites for conflict included the desire to teach Panjabi during school, to have town signs in Panjabi, and to wear turbans during school. These visible signs of difference also reflected deeper cultural anxieties and racializing stereotypes, which students learn to navigate and overturn. Fernando (2013, 2015) notes similar conflicts in French schools over the adoption of laws forbidding headscarves in public schools, and details how successful students navigate this conflict of values.

Rampton (2001) in a study of Asian students in London, noted that students’ performed a stylized
version of “Asian English” that reflected colonial stereotypes of kind but dimwitted subjects. He further noted that this served both rebellious and resistant purposes, avoiding work and drawing attention to white teachers’ racism. He further notes that the uses of this resistant language corresponded precisely to institutional sites of anxieties about integration and shared values, demonstrating students’ political and ideological awareness. Analogous colonial stereotypes in French language and culture have been vividly described by Franz Fanon and Albert Memmi, and more might be said about how students play with and re-appropriate these.

Heller (2001), in a study of a French Canadian school, notes that teachers play a large role in the creation of particular values, those of legitimate speaker and legitimate language. She notes that this operates through teacher attitudes towards language here, by promoting Standard Academic French over the Canadian Vernacular. It is also established through the work of teacher talk, IRE structures, and enforced turn taking that produce legitimate speakers. Conversely, Leonardo (2005) cautions that the ideology building functions of schools also racialize learners as “substudents” and “subpersons” that is, as non-legitimate speakers, listeners, learners.

Rosa (2014) in a study of Latina/o students in Chicago, uses language ideologies to show how schools are productive of values, as the connection between particular linguistic forms and personal identities. Language ideologies are then connected to two parallel processes that stigmatize their English as well as their Spanish language skills, Americanization and Diasporization. The former represents assimilation as a question of individual choice and mastery of monolingual English, and latter negatively values their Spanish skills according to a monolingual standard Spanish. In response to this double bind, students developed what he described as “inverted Spanglish” or the pronunciation of Spanish words with English phonology, a mocking way of testing the boundaries between languages, identities, and social expectations.

Rosa and Flores (2015) further develop this idea into raciolinguistic ideologies, suggesting that the notion of “appropriateness” at the heart of standardized English and academic languages more generally more closely reflects speakers racial and class ideology than any linguistic form. That is, judgments about linguistic correctness are made by listening subjects who express judgments about speakers racialized bodies as linguistic inappropriateness. This listening subject is also
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evoked indirectly Smith’s (2014) discussion of second and third generation Senegalese-French, who are not perceived as speaking correct French despite it being their native language.

Flores (2014) in a reading of previous ethnographic studies in New York city schools, offers advice to teachers and policy makers as listening subjects. Invoking Spivak’s subaltern speaker, he opens up indeterminacies in our readings of student speech – places where we are not sure which code or register they are using – and suggests five principles to help open up new possibilities for understanding, rather than imposing meaning. These understandings of language as a dynamic practice involve rejecting linguistic othering, contesting ideas of language, and opening new spaces for students to test out inter and trans language practices. We see here how changing values about language can translate into new and exciting language practices in the classroom. In the final two studies, students use transgressive practices to make their own spaces for dynamic language on the margins of the classroom.

Martinez and Moralez, (2014) in a study of students in Los Angeles, describe how young people explore traditional linguistic rituals like albur and apprentice to doble sentido through transgressive uses of language. These games serve a fourfold purpose, connecting students to Mexican cultural heritage and building their linguistic competences, and building classroom community through shared joking and transgression of teacher authority. This approach shares much with the Tetreault’s work on collaborative conflicts (2010) and performing respect (2009), looking at the community building aspect of seemingly aggressive speech rituals.

The final essay, by Sultana et al (2014) takes us from LA to Mongolia, as students engage in heteroglossic language, multilingual wordplay that borrows from American popular culture to transgress normative cultural boundaries and assert developing feminist identities. In this way young women assert a place for themselves in male dominated internet spaces. Sultana et al offer a transglossic framework to offer a richer analysis of these language acts as embedded in cultural values, transgressing norms, expressing student ideologies, and indexing identities. Like Tetreault’s recent work (2015) it offers a new focus on women’s language practices, with a framework that pushes analyses of language games beyond “happy hybridity” to express live tensions between differing norms, ideals, and values.
Drawing again on Negri's work, we can argue that he French republic declares itself the embodiment of universal values, equality, freedom, and fraternity, and creates a language in its image: rational, standardized, universal. Through public schools and other institutions, this language “language of schoolteachers” (Balibar 1985) operates economically, politically, and ideologically to assure republican social order and unity – and to exclude those who do not fit the model.

As a language of (ideal) communication Republican French is, above all, clear and rational. The language of Descartes and Moliere prides itself on being the language of logic and clarity (Trudgill 1998). Trudgill further suggests that this ideal of inherent clarity or rationality of French is a result of historical repression of linguistic difference. This repression shows the operation of recursivity, attacking multilingualism within a language (Irvine & Gal 2000). Bauman and Briggs (2000), reading the writings of Locke, describe this ideology of referentiality – language is one of individual reason and clarity.

French language ideology resolves contradictions between universal rationality and national character through monoglot standardization (Silverstein 1996) that naturalizes dominant linguistic practices. National unity is assured as much by the standardization and repression of regional varieties as by any positive content (Balibar 1985). Cooper (2007; in Smith 2015) goes so far as to suggest the French are in love with their linguistic norms. French becomes an icon of order and clarity, and by contrast, other varieties such as regional patois or the languages of colonized peoples are seen to express inherent, internal disorder and irrationality through a process of iconization (Irvine & Gal 2000).

Ironically, becoming a universal language of reason requires a great deal of exclusion and erasure. Smith's (2015) study of French-Senegalese notes that Francophonie is necessary, but not sufficient condition, for Frenchness. Linguistic constructions of national identity are predicated upon the ideological erasure (Irvine & Gal 2000) of French speakers of color. Dotson-Renta (2015) notes that this erasure operates historically to separate colonization from narratives of Frenchness.
French maintains its status as national language and universal reason only through the marginalization of diversity. Verlan, consciously trades on this diversity. Spoken by the young people of the suburbs and housing projects of France. Against communication ideals of clarity and universality, it is a “crypto-ludic” language, it is characterized by a pattern of syllable inversion and the use of popular slang. (Goudailler 2002), and by a high level of language borrowing (Doran 2002, 2007), a part of the everyday plurilingualism that is hidden by French language policy and monoglossic ideals (IcNevez 2008). Verlan has been unfortunately described as a the French Pig Latin (Davis 2004), a pidgin or a creole (Kent 2009), racializing and reductive ways of viewing fluid, playful uses of multiple codes. Historical approaches show connections to argot and secret languages, but can focus too narrowly on categorization, boundary fixing, assuring the Frenchness of the practice (Goudailler 2002) or on describing a language of marginalization and social fracture (Isabel 2005). Sociolinguistic studies offer a richer understanding of Verlan as socially embedded and identity building practice that involves richly figurative language, (Doran 2002), negotiations of national belonging (Doran, 2007), and the signaling of diverse heritages or “identity tagging” (Sloutsky and Black 2008).

To find the transgressive and even the activist side of language requires moving beyond a sociolinguistic view to one that takes ideology into account. We can see how French students use Irvine and Gal’s (2000) three moves of linguistic differentiation to create a new language from French. First, they attack recursivity, and rather than fighting multilingual aspects of their language include inter-language references as desired. Then, they reverse erasure, by emphasizing differences through vocal patterns than inflect Arabic pronunciation, through linguistic differences, and through the celebration of minority identities that are officially elided. Finally, they invert iconization, turning words inside out to show their arbitrary, changeable, noisy nature. So we can see that they invert a lot more than syllables – and to show the intelligence of young people who are considered icons of disorder. These operations transform a major language from within, not just creativity, more than an act of transgression, but making a language minor (Deleuze 1975), and in doing so regard language as a site of political struggle.
Future studies of Verlan could extend this to further examine the transgressive and community building aspects of this linguistic practice. A critical sociolinguistic view could draw on work that emphasizes the satirical re-voicing of colonial stereotypes (Rampton 2009), elements of power and student manipulation of the indexical functions of language (Pujolar 2001), the community building functions of transgressive language (Martinez & Moralez 2014) or student use of intertextuality as challenges to sexualizing and racializing discourses (Sultana et al 2014). Future studies might follow Le Nevez in noting:

By consciously and deliberately transgressing notions of appropriateness and correctness, by using language creatively and inventively, by being translingual and transcultural, activists can work to deliberately disrupt the assumed authority and privilege of the centre. In this sense, language is not simply a vehicle for activism but a potential site of activism as well. (Le Nevez 2008;316)

This perspective will challenge theorists of language and culture to look at activism, to emphasize the transformation of a major and hegemonic language of order from within, the creation of new languages, new spaces of resistance, or new identities from old stigmatizations.

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