Racializing the Nonnative English Speaker

Gail Shuck
Boise State University
Department of English

This article identifies some discursive processes by which White, middle-class, native-English-speaking, U.S.-born college students draw on a monolingualist ideology and position themselves and others within a language–race–nationality matrix. These processes construct the speakers' Whiteness and nativeness in English as unmarked and normal; mark nonnative speakers of English as non-White and foreign; and naturalize connections between language, national origin, and race. I argue that dominant ways of talking about race in the United States persist as templates for creating arguments about language. Ideological models are projected onto each other, recursively reproducing a hierarchical social order in which U.S.-born citizens, native English speakers, and Caucasians retain a privilege widely perceived to be a natural outcome of certain characteristics thought to be intrinsic to American-ness, nativeness (in English), or Whiteness.

Key words: racialization, race, language ideologies, discourse processes, monolingualism, nonnative English speakers

Language and race are closely linked as means of distinguishing Self from Other. This linking can be seen by examining language ideologies, or networks of beliefs about language that position human subjects within a social order (González & Melis, 2001; Irvine, 1989; Kroskrity, 2000; Schieffelin, Woolard, & Kroskrity, 1998; Silverstein, 1979). Language ideologies, although they cannot always be mapped directly onto beliefs about race, often evoke racial categories in ways that confirm or challenge that social order. Public discourse surrounding the use of nonstandard varieties of English and non-English languages in the United States, for example, is *racialized*—that is, expressed with indirect or direct reference to racial cat-

Correspondence should be sent to Gail Shuck, Boise State University, Department of English, 1910 University Drive, Boise, ID 83725–1525. E-mail: gshuck@boisestate.edu

egories or using rhetorical patterns most often associated with discussions of race and ethnicity, so that an undercurrent of racial distinctions runs through discourse about linguistic difference. Recognizing that discourse on language has a racializing function (Goldberg, 1993; Hill, 2001b; Lippi-Green, 1997; Schmidt, 2002; Urciuoli, 1996) allows me to start with this primary premise: The relationship between talk about language and talk about race is not coincidental, nor are the similarities in those discourses superficial. Phillipson (1992) argues that "[L]inguicism has taken over from racism as a more subtle way of hierarchizing social groups in the contemporary world" (p. 241). Rather than being separate forms of symbolic domination, linguistic discrimination and racism are linked through ideological structures that provide the discursive resources for laypersons, public figures, and academics alike to connect language and race in systematic ways.

Underlying the intersection of language and race is a language ideology that we call *the ideology of nativeness*, an Us-versus-Them division of the linguistic world in which native and nonnative speakers of a language are thought to be mutually exclusive, uncontested, identifiable groups (Shuck, 2001). At the core of this ideological model is a view of the world's speech communities as naturally monolingual and monocultural, whereby one language is semiotically associated with one nation (Blommaert & Verschueren, 1992; Gal & Irvine, 1995; Wiley & Lukes, 1996). The prototypical individual speaker is therefore also imagined as monolingual (Leung, Harris, & Rampton, 1997). Simplified *native–nonnative* categories, which emerge from this monolingualist model, are mapped onto other social hierarchies—especially class, ethnicity, and race—as well as onto existing cultural models of educational and political systems (Shuck, 2001; Urciuoli, 1996; Woolard, 1989). These models join to construct a social order inextricably tied to language use.

In public discourse about language, particularly policies regarding the use of non-English or nonstandard English varieties in the U.S. educational and other public settings, the links among race, language use, class, and national origin are frequently explicit (González & Melis, 2001; Schmidt, 2002; Wiley & Lukes, 1996; Woolard, 1989). This discourse coincides with, and is often used to justify, exclusionary practices that perpetuate the normalization of Whiteness, American-ness, and nativeness in certain prestige varieties of English. However, it is not only in public discourse that we see such assumptions at work. Indeed, to become dominant in the collective consciousness, an ideology must be available for use in everyday talk among laypersons. Research in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology has examined the role of face-to-face interaction as the site for the construction not only of immediate social relationships but also of broader sociocultural systems (e.g., Schieffelin, Woolard, & Kroskrity, 1998; Tannen, 1993; Tedlock & Mannheim, 1995). Casual conversation, because of its primacy in our daily lives, its role in constructing social relationships, and its capacity for exaggerating and altering truths (Shuck, 2004), is as important to investigate as the more public, documented forms of discourse.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Said (1978) and Pennycook (1998) noted the importance of binaries such as East–West, colonizer–colonized, teacher–student, native–nonnative, and so forth, as having generative power to produce structures of significance within which hierarchical social orders are perpetuated in academic, political, and conversational discourse. To understand why such oppositional pairs are more likely to be hierarchically related than semantically equivalent, it is necessary to draw on the linguistic concept of *markedness*—"the asymmetrical and hierarchical relationship between two poles of any opposition" (Waugh, 1982, p. 299). In a given binary pair, the unmarked term is treated as the normal or neutral term, whereas the marked term covers a narrower category. For example, the semantic difference between "actor" (unmarked) and "actress" (marked) gives the semantic feature maleness, present only in the generic term, an invisibility that allows it to be associated with neutrality. Whiteness is similarly invisible in relation to other racial categories, depending on the situational context (Trechter & Bucholtz, 2001).

We can apply markedness theory to the distinction between nativeness and nonnativeness—a distinction that entails a constellation of other binary features. Table 1 identifies some of these features as they were expressed in my interview data. The difference in visibility and markedness between features often associated with native English speakers and those associated with nonnative speakers is evident in this dichotomy. Note the absence of color, culture, and accent (see also Trechter & Bucholtz, 2001) on the native-speaker side. Such binaries, because of their unequal social value, provide the discursive means for constructing social hierarchies based on language. By investigating how everyday speakers discursively accomplish the processes of marking and unmarking individuals and groups, we can better understand how racialization is often a subtle practice deeply embedded in the way we speak.

At the same time, racialized discourse practices help to create a larger ideological context in which such binaries become perceived as objective categories. In discussing the common associations of language with race and national origin, Schmidt (2002) argues,

> [A] conjunction of the hegemonic position of the dominant English language and the socially constructed normalization of *Whiteness* creates an ideological context within which Americans speaking languages other than English, and whose origins lie in continents other than Europe, are racialized as alien outsiders, as *Others.* (p. 142)

How does it happen that language background, race, and nationality become conflated in this way? Language ideologies such as the ideology of nativeness rely heavily on processes of *naturalization*: Speakers rationalize social and linguistic differentiation as natural, or explainable in terms of biology or some universal truth

TABLE 1
Some Components of the Native/Nonnative Dichotomy

Native Speakers	Nonnative Speakers
Are American	Are international
Are experts in English	Are novices in English
Are White or Anglo	Are non-White or non-Anglo
Are ahead/faster	Are behind/slower
Are up to speed	Hold everyone else (native speakers) back
Are compared to parents and "normal humans"	Are compared to young children, the mentally disabled or "emotionally disturbed," and those who don't care
Take normal classes	Take easy classes that cater to them
Have no accent or have regional ones	Have accents
Are perfectly comprehensible	Are incomprehensible
Have little or no responsibility for communicating effectively with nonnative speakers	Have full responsibility for communicating effectively with native speakers
Have no culture	Have culture

(Gal & Irvine, 1995; Silverstein, 1979). In particular, people develop iconic links between language-related categories on one hand, and racial, national, economic, and even moral categories on the other, leading them to see linguistic features as depicting or representing a particular social group, as if those linguistic features were part of that group's inherent nature (Gal & Irvine, 1995; Urciuoli, 1996; Woolard, 1989). Iconicity allows speakers and hearers to imagine that the connection between, for example, being Caucasian and speaking English without an accent (see Example 2) is natural and even necessary (Gal & Irvine, 1995, p. 973).

THE STUDY

This article offers new analyses of data I gathered for a larger study of the relations between language ideologies and performance, forms of verbal art in which attention is drawn to aesthetic display (Shuck, 2001, 2004). In 1997 and 1998, I conducted 21 one-hour interviews with 52 self-selecting, first-year undergraduate students—interviewees met with me in pairs and groups of three—at a large university in the southwestern United States. Open-ended questions focused primarily on language in educational settings. Approximately two-thirds of those interviewed were native English speakers, and approximately one-third were nonnative English speakers. Some students felt they could not completely identify with either category. For this article, I have only used data from interviews with White native English speakers. As Kiesling (2001) argues, it is important to examine the discourse of the dominant group to understand how they achieve and maintain that dominance.

Following the work of Said (1978), Woolard (1989), Pennycook (1998), and other scholarship in critical discourse analysis and linguistic anthropology (Fairclough, 1989; Schieffelin, Woolard, & Kroskrity, 1998), I examine discursive strategies used by speakers in face-to-face interaction to construct Selves and Others and tie those constructs to sociocultural and ideological contexts. Specifically, I investigate the processes by which White, middle-class, native-English-speaking, U.S.-born college students position themselves and others within a language–race–nationality matrix. In addition to the binaries identified in Table 1, I identified common tropes and strategies that speakers used to discuss language and language users. These include complaints about accents, simultaneous admiration and derision of multilingualism, narratives about immigrants who, it is claimed, refuse to learn English, and a metaphor of competition, which enables the "ahead–behind" opposition (see Table 1) when representing students in an integrated course for both native and nonnative English speakers at that university.

STRATEGIES FOR RACIALIZING LANGUAGE USERS

The interviewees in this study relied on a number of primary strategies for constructing nonnative English speakers as non-White, foreign Others. The following are broad categories of such strategies:

- Mentioning race or ethnicity explicitly in connection to language.
- Marking the Other (through pronoun reference and other linguistic means).
- Creating iconic associations between language, nationality, or race that are so tightly linked that one category of social differentiation comes to stand for another.
- Relying on linguistic forms provided by other racialized discourses, such as colonialism or the notion of reverse discrimination.

Some of the strategies that speakers use in everyday, conversational interaction are more overtly racially oriented—and indeed racist in their implications—than others. Identifying someone's race or ethnicity explicitly in connection to language is the most overt. On the other hand, the strategy of simply marking the Other while the Self (as well as the Self's ways of speaking) remains invisible may not appear on the surface to be racially motivated. However, such marking, and the accompanying variance in visibility for some groups, is one of the primary means that dominant ideologies use to mask their own dominance. Markedness, although not always explicitly applied to race, enables the more overtly racialized discourse patterns to be taken for granted as natural. It is therefore important to include this strategy in the following discussion.

Making the Race–Language Connection Explicit

Few students whom I interviewed named a racial category in explicit relation to a discussion of language, but some did. One student referred to her own community as White while she contrasted her hometown of Scottsdale, Arizona, with the multicultural opportunities provided by an integrated university composition course for, as I had put it in the interview, "Americans" and "international students." It is a reasonable assumption to imagine a multicultural class as also multiracial. A far more egregious example comes from a 1990 issue of *The* [Singapore] *Straits Times* (cited in Kandiah, 1998), which ran the following advertisement in two different versions on two different days. The ad was seeking a particular class of instructors:

Example 1

a. July 12: Native speaking, *expatriate* English teachers for foreign students.
b. July 14: Native speaking, *Caucasian* English teachers for foreign students.
(Kandiah, 1998, p. 79, italics added)

What was apparently meant by "expatriate" in the first version was clarified in the second, thereby excluding, as Kandiah (1998) writes with wry irony, any one of

an upstart bunch of English users across the world, who had been taught the language so well by their "native speaking" teachers that they now entertained the delusion that they were reliable and valid users, interpreters and judges of the language, "native speakers" in short. (p. 80)

Desired applicants were not just native to the United States, Great Britain, or New Zealand (although the next example might suggest that even New Zealanders might not be welcome); they also had to be White.

Example 1 indicates that not only race but also national origin is semiotically linked to nativeness in English. To this we can add another dimension: the presence or absence of a "foreign" accent. The notion that foreigners have accents and Americans do not is commonly held (e.g., Lippi-Green, 1997; Schmidt, 2002). Underlying this link is the markedness of "accents." In the following complaint (Example 2) about two teaching assistants (TAs), accent plays a central role, as do the racial categories constructed by the interviewee. This complaint is also noteworthy for its value as a dramatic performance that exaggerates the difference in the student's expectations of what form of English the two TAs spoke (Shuck, 2001):[1]

Example 2

Jen: I took—..what did I take. …MATH..121 last semester. …and…my
       TA:, …was <[high pitch] very ni:ce, [high pitch]> ..but <u>she was</u>
       <u>fro:m—..I don't know where she was from</u>. ..<u>an Asian-speaking coun-</u>
       <u>try though</u>. …<u>because she was Asian</u>.
       …I had no clue, ..what she said, ..the whole semester, […]..I ended up
       talking to the professor, …and it was like..this WEIRD English class,
       where..it was experimental— I mean, ..math class, sorry, …and..they
       had five— it was a five-hundred person lecture, …had I known this, I
       wouldn't have taken it, /but/ I didn't know.
G: /hm./
Jen: ..a:nd, ..then they had TAs there. ..and during the lecture, you'd ask the
       TA if you had a question or whatever. …<u>couldn't..understand..what</u>
       <u>she said.</u> and..I didn't want to like..hurt her feelings or whatever,
G: Mhm. Mhm.=
Jen: […] …so, ..I started checking in with her,
       ..and going, [taps table]
       ..to sit, [taps table]
       ..by this OTHER guy. [taps table]
       …<u>who I assumed…spoke…um</u>—…or, wh- I s- <u>I assumed he was</u>
       <u>from America</u>. ..okay? '<u>cause he was like Caucasian</u>, <u>…he (wa?)s</u>
       <u>from New Zealand</u>.
G: hm.
Jen: <u>…couldn't understand…what..HE said.</u>

When White, monolingual English speakers represent these linguistic Others in
performances, the Other-ness becomes exaggerated (Shuck, 2004). Jen constructs
both of her teachers as foreign and incomprehensible, explicitly naming their na-
tionalities and races as "Asian" and "Caucasian," respectively. Indeed, the first
TA's Asian-ness and the second TA's Caucasian-ness are keys to getting the joke.
Jen juxtaposes the two TAs in her narrative to highlight the irony that two teachers
from different racial backgrounds could be so similarly incomprehensible. This
irony rests on the expectation that prototypical East Asian physical features indi-
cate someone's nonnativeness in English and Caucasian physical features indicate
nativeness. Jen does not mention her own Whiteness in this narrative, nor does she
suggest that her race might influence her ability to communicate. To make this a
memorable performance, and to underscore the two instructors' incomprehensibil-
ity, she uses almost identical punch lines in each episode and relies on a similar
rhythm and contrastive stress to punctuate the similarity: "couldn't understand…
what..HE said." Mentioning race, then, is essential for this narrative to be effective
as a performance. Moreover, because the intended humor relies on the expectation

that the Caucasian TA would speak English with no accent, it paradoxically reifies the race–language link.

Marking the Other, Unmarking the Self

The distinction between having and not having an accent is central to the ideology of the Standard Language (Lippi-Green, 1997; Wiley & Lukes, 1996). Wiley and Lukes (1996) point out that the widespread belief in the logical superiority of one variety of a language is a way of masking the links between language and social groups with differential power. The standard variety (to the extent that there is an identifiable one) is, in other words, unmarked and invisible, whereas any other way of speaking or writing is at best a "dialect," and at worst, a signal of laziness or refusal to learn English (Urciuoli, 1996). Having an accent, then, means being marked as not speaking the prestige variety of English. We can speculate that Jen, in Example 2, was intending to say, "…this other guy, who I assumed spoke [English]," and then realized that he did in fact speak English. His accented English was thus initially characterized as something other than English. His Whiteness, at least momentarily, is by extension cast into the spotlight. A Caucasian who speaks unaccented English is usually unmarked and invisible, but this student marks the particular race–accent link quite explicitly, showing us that that TA's speech violates what she sees as the norm.

   The marked status of the nonnative English speaker—and the invisibility of the native English speaker—is so deeply embedded in the dominant ideology that it remains intact even when the native–nonnative labels are reversed. In the following excerpt (Example 3) from the same interview, two native English speakers describe a situation in which they were actually nonnative speakers of Spanish on vacation in Mexico. They depict native Spanish speakers in the way that nonnative English speakers are usually depicted, as having incomprehensible accents and being unable to communicate. Such a representation allows the interviewees to retain their privileged position as people who have no accents:

   Example 3

      Jen: /Like/..in //Cabo// San Lucas, and in Cancun, but—…I..could barely
              communicate with the people at all. I /could/ talk^v
       G: /hm./..mhm^v=
      Jen: =w- I could get my thoughts out, …but when they'd speak, I—..it's
              like I would have th–..them write it down, in front of me, and THEN I
              could understand it,
       G: /uh-huh^v/
      Jen: but /just the/..accents.
       G: ..m//hm^v//
     Kate: //Yeah.//

G: ../Mhm^v/
Jen: /So heavy./=
Kate: =like taking the cab ride home, and /(??/?),
Jen: /Yeah!/ You have no clue what they're saying to you.

I have underlined utterances to highlight Jen's locating the blame for miscommunication with the *native* Spanish speakers. Because of the status of non-English languages relative to that of English, the interviewees' being native speakers of English allows them a privilege that absolves them of responsibility for communicating effectively. Initially, Jen argues that she could not communicate but soon she names the locals' heavy accents as the problem. At the end of the excerpt, she even employs a commonly heard variant of the canonical "incomprehensible accent" complaint, "I couldn't understand a word they said" (Shuck, 2001). The generic "you" in that line further establishes a kind of identification with the listeners: "us." This categorical dismissal of an Other's speech is central to the ideology of nativeness.

This student is projecting an ideologically bound property of nonnative speakers—incomprehensible accents—onto the native Spanish speakers she encountered, thereby confirming the hierarchical relationship between the unmarked and marked groups. She is able to accomplish this switch, rendering their nativeness in Spanish irrelevant, for a number of reasons. First, U.S. students on spring break in Mexico are notorious for treating their host country as if it were a U.S. colony or simply an exotic playground to be exploited at will. From such an ethnocentric perspective, Mexicans, even in their own country, are imagined as foreign. This helps Jen justify the claim that they have accents, as foreigners and accents are so closely linked in this ideology. Second, she does not mention what kind of accent the heavy ones were being contrasted with. This omission is a way of "unmarking" her own way of speaking, which, by its very invisibility, is most likely to be the standard by which she is determining who has an accent. Third, she proposes an opposition between her own unproblematic ability to get her thoughts out, on one hand, with "when they'd speak," on the other. Once again, the native *English* speakers in this context remain unmarked and invisible, despite being nonnative speakers of the language in question. Native speakers of other languages are, in contrast, seen primarily in terms of their foreignness and their *accentedness*.

Iconicity, Erasure, and Recursiveness

Racializing is also accomplished by means of creating iconic associations between categories assumed to be interchangeable. Gal and Irvine's (1995) model of semiotic naturalization sheds light on how these iconic links are produced and reproduced. This model identifies the processes of erasure and recursiveness as related to iconicity (Gal & Irvine, 1995). Erasure is an ignoring of historical, economic, social,

and linguistic phenomena that do not fit the imagined social order. In the previous example, the speaker, by privileging her own speech over that of the native Spanish speakers, erases her own nonnativeness in Spanish, as well as the hierarchical economic and political relationship between the United States and Mexico. Recursiveness is a reproduction of the same hierarchies, which result from processes of erasure and iconicity, in discourse about other groups or activities. This helps to account for the description of the heavy accents of the native Spanish speakers in Mexico. The same hierarchical relations between the native- and nonnative-speaker columns in Table 1 are recursively applied to the interactions between the spring break tourists—the native English speakers—and the local Spanish speakers, even though the components on the left now refer to nonnative speakers (of Spanish) and those on the right now refer to native speakers (of Spanish). Recursiveness enables a given set of ideological components to remain intact as constellations of co-occurring features. When one component is drawn on as a descriptor of a particular social group, the other components in that constellation follow. It is thus possible for participants in an interaction to conceptualize *foreigners* as being necessarily, naturally unable to communicate, even in their own native language.

Intersecting With Other Discourses

Pennycook (1998) outlines such colonialist constructions, implied in the preceding example, as they are manifest in the field of English language teaching. These include diminutive and/or exoticized representations of the "colonized." By drawing on the discourses of colonialism, speakers of many language backgrounds—not only native English speakers, and not only English teachers—perpetuate a social order that has native English speakers on the top and native speakers of languages less familiar to most Americans, and especially those spoken by non-Whites, at the bottom. A strategy for racializing language users is thus to map native- and nonnative-speaker (English and non-English) hierarchies onto "traditional structures of significance" (Woolard, 1989) already existing in the collective consciousness, such as ideologies regarding race, gender, education, and so forth. Analyzing arguments in favor of San Francisco's Proposition O, an English-Only initiative, Woolard (1989) found that common themes already available in U.S. political discourse enabled negative characteristics such as bossism, manipulation, or uninformedness to be not only associated with the use of non-English languages in elections, but also constructed as "Ethnic and Other" (Woolard, 1989, p. 276). This kind of intersection of ideological models allows the discourse patterns associated with one model, such as the paternalistic images associated with colonialism (see Example 4) or dominant understandings of political corruption, to be used in the service of creating hierarchically related Self–Other distinctions based on linguistic background.

Many native English speakers draw on colonialist discourses, particularly spatial metaphors of place and images of exotic, primitive natives, as they imagine the least likely speaker of English. The ideology of nativeness relies on the notion of place as a dimension along which native and nonnative English speakers may be discursively imagined: Native English speakers are from "here," whereas nonnative speakers must be from far away. Example 4 arose during a discussion of foreign instructors who might be acceptable as university instructors in the United States:

Example 4

Joe:	..I'm I'm not saying he [an instructor] has to be a native English spea/ker./
G:	/Ah./..OK.=
Joe:	=uh, ..he can be…from—..or she—
G?:	/mhm^v/
Joe:	…/can be/ from…I don't know, <u>some little island somewhere</u>.
?:	[softly] /@/
Joe:	…/they/ just have to have a certain level of…uh proficiency.

Joe constructs an image of someone who might not ordinarily be considered a proficient English speaker: someone "from some little island somewhere." Remoteness not only from English-dominant communities but also from civilization forms an integral part of his argument. The reference to an island in a discussion of language proficiency, for those who hold an ideology of language that associates English with civilization, subtly evokes an image of a primitive, brown-skinned island-dweller who speaks an exotic language. This association is easy for Joe to make because colonialist discourse already has within it the discursive means for imagining the superiority of one social group over another. As Said (1978) and Pennycook (1998) point out, dominant models of race always underlie the perpetuation of colonialist discourse.

Speakers also draw on the language of discrimination and difference, which often indexes a pervasive distaste for segregation, in talk about native and nonnative speakers (see Ochs, 1990, for a discussion of indexicality). One component of a widely held view of race relations is that any attempt to create schools, organizations, or programs with admission based on racial classification is necessarily a throwback to the precivil-rights days of racial segregation. Even the mere mention of race can lead some White people to claims that they "don't see color." Highlighting color or ethnicity as a means of distinguishing between groups is seen as a kind of "special treatment," whereby members of the dominant group are excluded and members of underrepresented groups are given undue advantage. Expressions such as "catering," "claiming (or crying) racism," and "special treatment" appear frequently in arguments that "reverse discrimination" must be curbed by eliminating affirmative action policies.[2]

The language of "special treatment" arose in more than one interview during discussions of the integrated, multilingual English composition class and of the English-Only movement. Such racialized discourse is further projected onto a model of education as competition, which tends to construct the majority—the invisibly privileged—as an oppressed group. Nonnative English speakers are frequently represented as "holding [native speakers] back" in settings in which educational resources (teacher help, time to cover material, etc.) are thought to be finite and therefore the object of competition between groups (Shuck, 2001). When educational resources are seen as limited, only the unmarked group's educational possibilities are seen as threatened. If students marked by language background are in a class with "regular" students, the former are described as having special interests that will impinge on the rights of the otherwise invisible majority. English-Only proponents similarly see the use of languages other than English as an affront to the ideal "color-blind" society, and thus imagine any attempt to nurture the use of those languages as catering to the needs of special interests. The following excerpts (Examples 5 and 6) highlight this discourse as it is used in discussions of multilingual classes:

Example 5

Mary: …that if..you go into a class like that, …you know, they're gonna cater to the needs of the people that…DON'T know exactly what's going on,

Example 6

Amy: maybe ["I'm an international student"] shouldn't..be written..right at the top, because I don't think..special:…help should be given to them,

In Example 5, the people who "don't know what's going on" are nonnative English speakers. In Example 6, Amy is referring to the composition placement exam, which she suggests would be most equitable if it did not identify international students as potentially needing any kind of extra help. Here, the ideology of education as competition, the discourse of reverse discrimination, and the ideology of nativeness converge. Because the United States is imagined to be monolingual, those who are not in that monolingual majority are imagined as outsiders or a minority group who might claim discrimination and demand special treatment.

The discourse of discrimination is also linked to colonialist discourses that rely on adult–child images to describe the relations between the unmarked group (native English speakers) and the marked group (nonnative English speakers). Amy, the same student who argued against offering special help for nonnative English speakers, also came up with a string of paternalistic analogies concerning the relations between native and nonnative speakers, on one hand, and relations between

parents and children, as well as between "normal humans" (her phrase) and people with developmental disabilities, on the other (Shuck, 2001). Drawing again on Gal and Irvine's (1995) notion of recursiveness, we see that the hierarchies between White and Black, parent and child, and native and nonnative speakers are naturalized as though they all followed naturally and logically from each other. This is clear in Example 7. Amy agrees with her partner (Joe) that a combined class would benefit nonnative English speakers more than native speakers:

Example 7

Joe: ..I I think it would be fun, ..for me, but I think it would be a lot..more beneficial for them.=
Amy: =right.=
Cindy: =me too.
Amy: …you know, we were studying <u>this</u> in…um..psychology last semester, on how…typically, …the oldest child in the family, ..is..the smartest. […] a- w–..we talked about it, it makes a lot of sense, when…um the oldest child is born, he's around..his parents….only. ..typically. ..when the second child is born, ..he's around parents, …AND the other child. ..which is typically…close in age. …um, …having that..lower mental ability^v ..of…the second child, arou:nd the baby^v
G: /mhm^v/
Amy: /while he's/ learning^v […] …he tends to learn a lot of what he kno:ws, …from the other child. …which is a lower…capacity, …than what the parents have.
G: ..mhm.=
Amy: =an:d—so I understand <u>that theory</u>, and in a way, …it would be I think more beneficial to the international student, than..the native speaker.

Amy's use of "this" and "that theory" (both underlined) at the beginning and end of her turn naturalizes the connection between babies' cognitive development and the experience of nonnative English speakers in an integrated English class, making it seem as though the theory she learned in psychology (and surely has simplified or even misinterpreted) was in fact a theory of second language acquisition. She simply and uncritically erases the complexity of multilingual students' linguistic knowledge and renders them comparable to children with "lower mental ability."

This hierarchizing of native and nonnative English speakers has a far more extreme form: the xenophobic discourse represented by one interviewee's (Cindy's) use of the reactionary imperative, "Go back to Mexico." This only appeared once in this form in my data (Example 8), but the "love it or leave it" discourse provides linguistic structures that other interviewees drew on to make similar comments in other contexts. Here is the canonical form, underlined:

Example 8

Cindy: they need to be able to function in society. …you know <u>if they…if they</u>
<u>want to speak Spanish</u>, ..and..function in their society, well, you know,
th- …(you can? then?) <u>go back to Mexico</u>, you know?

Here, the imperative is encased in an *if/(then)*-clause structure. In Example 9, an-
other student similarly relied on the imperative and added a rhetorical question
(underlined). The primary speaker (Kelli), like Cindy in the previous example, is
also talking about immigrants who apparently refuse to learn English.

Example 9

Kelli: I can't imagine anyone..living here, who would be intentionally trying
NOT to learn..the language, 'cause <u>then</u>,
Sara: /that's true./
Kelli: ..<u>why /are you here</u>./
Sue: //yeah,//
Kelli: //like,// …leave.

Kelli's shifting from "anyone" to "you" allows her, syntactically, to use the imper-
ative, "Leave," which draws directly on xenophobic discourse.

Example 10 is remarkably similar to Examples 8 and 9, with a variation of the
question "Why are you here," a conditional clause, and a hint of the injunction to
"go back to [where you came from]." The students in Example 10, however, were
not talking about immigrants refusing to learn English. The first speaker, Tim, has
just blamed the English composition program for its "backwards" decision to sep-
arate U.S. and international students. By the last two lines in this short excerpt,
however, the blame seems to shift to the international students, who are seen as po-
tentially isolating themselves:

Example 10

Tim: =I..well I think…whoever..you know, separated the classrooms, is—
Ann: …doesn't exactly understand <u>why they're here</u>. They're here to..get
the American—=
Tim: =yeah.
Laura: …<u>Why didn't they stay where they were from</u>, if they wanted to
be…isolated still.

The similarities between the structure of Laura's comment and that of the canonical
xenophobic argument are too striking to ignore. Ann initially embeds in her turn a

variation of "Why are you here" although without the accusatory tone. Laura, however, borrows the question form and approximates nationalistic discourses more closely in a particularly accusatory way: "Why didn't they stay where they were from…?" No longer is the apparent segregation of international students the fault of unaware administrators, as it was only moments earlier in the clause, "whoever […] separated the classrooms." Now the international students are agents rather than objects, who are imagined as hypothetically wanting to be isolated. The form of Laura's question derives from the same kind of "Love it or leave it" argument made by Cindy in Example 8: "If they want to speak Spanish and function in their society [i.e., be isolated],…go back to Mexico." Laura is able to draw on xenophobic discourse, whether or not she intends to argue that international students should go back to where they came from, for two primary reasons. First, the forms are easily accessible because they are well established in dominant ideologies of nationalism and assimilation. Second, those ideologies are directly interconnected with the construction of group boundaries, especially along ethnic or linguistic lines. As long as international students are seen as outsiders and linguistic minorities in the United States, they are subject to the same kind of exclusionary discourse.

CONCLUSION

I have attempted to show that, although many forms of discourse about language use and language users do not explicitly mention racial categories, dominant ways of talking about race in the United States persist as templates for creating arguments about language. Ideological models are projected onto each other, recursively reproducing a hierarchical social order in which U.S.-born citizens, native English speakers, and Caucasians come to stand in for each other as conceptual categories. Moreover, members of those categories have an invisible privilege over their marked counterparts—a privilege that is widely and uncritically accepted as a natural outcome of certain characteristics thought to be intrinsic to American-ness, nativeness (in English) or Whiteness. Only when confronted with their own racial, linguistic, or physical distinctiveness—that is, when the features that identify them as a social group are semiotically made visible—do the privileged majority begin to talk about themselves as oppressed or discriminated against.

Understanding how speakers link ideological models, naturalizing a hierarchical social order with White, native English speakers on top, can shed light on the relations between such a social order and practices of systematic exclusion of some social groups from access to educational, political, and economic resources. Pennycook (1998), analyzing the legacy of colonialism that pervades English language teaching, urges scholars to examine how the reproduction of dominant ideologies is produced and reproduced in the language of both colonizer and colonized. Dominant ideologies maintain their hegemonic positions not because they belong

only to people in authority but rather because they are pervasive in much larger discourse formations located in a vast array of communicative practices (Foucault, 1977), from individual interactions (such as the comment often made to a U.S.-born, Iraqi-American student of mine: "You speak English so well!"), to advertising, to national language policies, and to the teaching of English as an international language. We must therefore investigate the full range of such practices, to uncover the links among them, and to be as self-reflective as possible about the ways in which we as scholars and educators participate in those ideologies. As Kramsch (1997) and Leung, Harris, and Rampton (1997) suggest, we must understand how educational policies and practices such as hiring, testing, pedagogical emphases, research paradigms, and classroom interactions can be infused with racialized discourses and exclusionary practices based on reified linguistic and ethnic categories.

Shuck (2001) has argued that anyone, including the most multilingual-friendly among us, has easy access to the kinds of discourse strategies provided by these pervasive ideological models that link race and language. We frequently draw on contradictory models while creating conversational cohesion within our speech and our writing. McElhinny (2001) and Hill (2001a) note that the discourse of Whiteness maintains its power by paying lip service to "diversity." As Blackledge (2003) reminds us, "Hegemonic discourse is most effective where it is discreet and uncontested" (p. 343). It is in the subtleties, then, that we must investigate relations between language and power. Rather than dismissing the dramatic, verbal performances of college students as innocent complaints merely intended to create social bonds among young adults, we should pay greater attention to the ways their discursive practices are linked to our own.

ENDNOTES

[1]Please see Appendix for transcription notes. Interviewees' names are pseudonyms.

[2]The U.S. Supreme Court case of the *Regents of University of California v. Bakke* (1978) invalidated the university's quota program by which members of minority groups could be admitted to the university via a special admissions process that would hold a certain number of spaces for non-White students. The plaintiff, Allan Bakke, argued that, in not being admitted initially, he was a victim of "reverse discrimination."

REFERENCES

Blackledge, A. (2003). Imagining a monocultural community: Racialization of cultural practice in educational discourse. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education, 2,* 331–347.

Blommaert, J., & Verschueren, J. (1992). The role of language in European nationalist ideologies. *Pragmatics, 2,* 355–375.

Chafe, W. (1993). Prosodic and functional units of language. In J. Edwards & M. Lampert (Eds.), *Talking data: Transcription and coding in discourse and research* (pp. 33–43). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Edwards, J., & Lampert, M. (Eds.). (1993). *Talking data: Transcription and coding in discourse and research.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and power.* London: Longman.

Foucault, M. (1977). *The archaeology of knowledge* (A. M. Sheridan Smith, Trans.). New York: Pantheon.

Gal, S., & Irvine, J. (1995). The boundaries of languages and disciplines: How ideologies construct difference. *Social Research, 62,* 967–1001.

Goldberg, D. T. (1993). *Racist culture: Philosophy and the politics of meaning.* Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

González, R. D., & Melis, I. (Eds.). (2001). *Language ideologies: Critical perspectives on the Official English movement* (Vol. 2). New York: National Council of Teachers of English.

Hill, J. (2001a). Comments, questions, and enthusiastic praise. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology, 11,* 79–83.

Hill, J. (2001b). The racializing function of language panics. In R. D. Gonzalez & I. Melis (Eds.), *Language ideologies: Critical perspectives on the Official English movement* (Vol. 2, pp. 245–267). New York: National Council of Teachers of English.

Irvine, J. (1989). When talk isn't cheap: Language and political economy. *American Ethnologist, 16,* 248–267.

Kandiah, T. (1998). Epiphanies of the deathless native user's manifold avatars: A post-colonial perspective on the native speaker. In R. Singh (Ed.), *The native speaker: Multilingual perspectives* (pp. 79–110). New Delhi, India: Sage.

Kiesling, S. (2001). Stances of whiteness and hegemony in fraternity men's discourse. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology, 11,* 101–115.

Kramsch, C. (1997). The privilege of the nonnative speaker. *PMLA, 112,* 359–369.

Kroskrity, P. (Ed.). (2000). *Regimes of language: Ideologies, polities, and identities.* Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research.

Leung, C., Harris, R., & Rampton, B. (1997). The idealized native speaker, reified ethnicities, and classroom realities. *TESOL Quarterly, 31,* 543–560.

Lippi-Green, R. (1997). *English with an accent: Language, ideology, and discrimination in the United States.* London: Routledge.

McElhinny, B. (2001). See no evil, speak no evil: White police officers' talk about race and affirmative action. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology, 11,* 65–78.

Ochs, E. (1990). Indexicality and socialization. In J. W. Stigler, R. A. Shweder, & G. Herdt (Eds.), *Cultural psychology* (pp. 287–308). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Pennycook, A. (1998). *English and the discourses of colonialism.* London: Routledge.

Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism.* Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Regents of University of California v. Bakke, 438 U.S. 265 (1978).

Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism.* New York: Vintage.

Schieffelin, B., Woolard, K., & Kroskrity, P. (Eds.). (1998). *Language ideologies: Practice and theory.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Schmidt, R. (2002). Racialization and language policy: The case of the U.S.A. *Multilingua, 21,* 141–161.

Shuck, G. (2001). *Imagining the native speaker: The poetics of complaint in university student discourse.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Arizona.

Shuck, G. (2004). Conversational performance and the poetic construction of an ideology. *Language in Society, 33,* 195–223.

Silverstein, M. (1979). Language structure and linguistic ideology. In P. Clyne, W. Hanks, & C. Hofbauer (Eds.), *The elements: A parasession on linguistic units and levels* (pp. 193–247). Chicago: Chicago Linguistic Society.

Tannen, D. (Ed.). (1993). *Gender and conversational interaction.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Tedlock, D., & Mannheim, B. (Eds.). (1995). *The dialogic emergence of culture.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Trechter, S., & Bucholtz, M. (2001). White noise: Bringing language into whiteness studies. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology, 11,* 3–21.

Urciuoli, B. (1996). *Exposing prejudice: Puerto Rican experiences of language, race, and class.* Boulder, CO: Westview.

Waugh, L. (1982). Marked and unmarked: A choice between unequals in semiotic structure. *Semiotica, 38,* 299–318.

Wiley, T., & Lukes, M. (1996). English-Only and standard English ideologies in the U.S. *TESOL Quarterly, 30,* 511–535.

Woolard, K. (1989). Sentences in the language prison: the rhetorical structuring of an American language policy debate. *American Ethnologist, 16,* 268–278.

APPENDIX

Transcription Conventions*

:	elongated vowel or consonant
=	latching (no pause between turns by different speakers)
..	short pause (under one-half second)
…	longer pause
/text/	overlapping speech
//text//	overlap—used to distinguish successive overlapping utterances
te-	truncated word
text—	truncated intonation unit
.	sentence-final (low, falling) intonation
,	continuing turn but end of intonation unit
?	question intonation
text^V	rising intonation on declarative utterances (includes the common rise on "mhm " and other backchannel cues)
TEXT	loud or emphatic stress
[text]	researcher observations or descriptions of extralinguistic factors
(text?)	best guess about what was said
@	one "pulse" of laughter (equivalent to a syllable)
<@text@>	laughing or laughing quality throughout an utterance

*Adapted from Edwards and Lampert (1993) and Chafe (1993).