Raciolinguistic Prejudice in the Classroom

Raciolinguistic prejudice is discrimination based on accent, dialect, and speech patterns (Dobinson & Mercieca, 2020). It leads to the unfair treatment of individuals based on how their language practices intersect with their racial or ethnic identity, privileging standardized varieties and perpetuating racial prejudice in educational and social contexts (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Standard Academic English is the form of English used in academic writing and speaking. However, it is not the only way to express academic ideas. The imposition of Standard English in academic settings is a form of racial discrimination that does not reflect the diverse linguistic reality (Kinyon, 2024).

Recognizing Raciolinguistic Prejudice in the Classroom

Raciolinguistic discrimination can occur explicitly or implicitly. Some forms of raciolinguistic discrimination in the classroom include:

- Assessment rubrics that penalize non-standard linguistic features
  - focus on surface-level errors on writing assignments, such as grammar, word choice, and normative English forms of argumentation (Kinyon, 2024; Kubota et al., 2023)
  - emphasis on performance-based criteria in speech/presentations (i.e., how students sound; e.g., speak fluently, error-free, accent-free) (Ho et al., 2023; Kao & Wang, 2013)
- Classroom discourse
  - overlooking students who speak non-standard forms of English (Vanegas Rojas et al., 2016)
  - favoring students who speak "standard" forms of English (Page, 2023)
  - pressuring students into classroom participation (Vanegas Rojas et al., 2016)
- Inappropriate comments
  - comments on language proficiency, such as "your English is so good," may seem innocent, inquisitive, or complimentary but can be insulting, embarrassing, and "further accentuate raciolinguistic Otherness" (Kubota et al., 2023, p. 758)
  - jokes about student language use or proficiency (Vanegas Rojas et al., 2016)
- Unclear feedback
  - feedback with vague language that does not detail expectations or give students tools and directions for improvement (e.g. write in "academic English," speak "plain English") (Kubota et al., 2023)
- Segregating students
  - grouping students based on language background (Vanegas Rojas et al., 2016)

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