Indexicality and Iconization in Mock(ing) Spanish:

Language Ideology through Semiotic Pragmatics

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Mock Spanish: discursive practice in which English speakers use elements they "believe to be Spanish to create a subregister of colloquial English used in jocular or humorously insulting interaction." (Hill 2005: 113)

Direct indexicality (Ochs 1990):

This practice indexically entails an easygoing, humorous, yet cosmopolitan positioning - "positive colloquial persona" (Hill 2005: 114)

Speakers are fully aware of this direct indexicality, since it is a practice fully "enregistered" in this function of jokes or humorous insult (Hill 2005, 114)

Indirect indexicality:

The use of Mock Spanish *presupposes* – inderectly indexes - a "fully naturalized set of understandings of person in Spanish-speaking populations that is required to appreciate the humor of Mock Spanish." (Hill 2005, 114)

Direct indexicality lays on a negative racist stereotypes of Spanish speakers as "lazy, dirty, unintelligent, sexually loose, and politically corrupted" people (114).

Indirect indexicality operates covertly for non-Spanish speakers.

From *index* to *icon*

The negative racial stereotype regarding Latinos speakers is not just a **presupposition** to be indexed inderectly, but an **entailment** of Mock Spanish.

Mock Spanish works as an **icon** of the negative racial stereotype – its representative quality is intrinsic – it is "a Firstness of it as a First" (Peirce 1955)

From *icon* to *iconization*

Iconization "involves a transformation of the sign relationship between linguistic features (or varieties) and the social images with which they are linked." (Irvin and Gal 2000:37)

Linguistic features that index social groups *appear* to be iconic representations of them.

The process of iconization "*entails* the attribution of cause and immediate necessity to a connection (between linguistic features and social groups) that maybe only historical, contingent, or conventional." (37)

Naturalization of iconization

Mock Spanish is not Spanish at all. It is itself an ideological representation, which reinforces the implication of necessity established by the iconization.

Mock Spanish permits a naturalization of its own ideological iconicity.

Intertextuality:

Mock Spanish expressions are sources of intertextual series.

Consistency of the range of tones that these discursive practices evoke, from merely light and entertaining to intentionally offensive (Hill 2005, 115)

- The *manana* procrastination
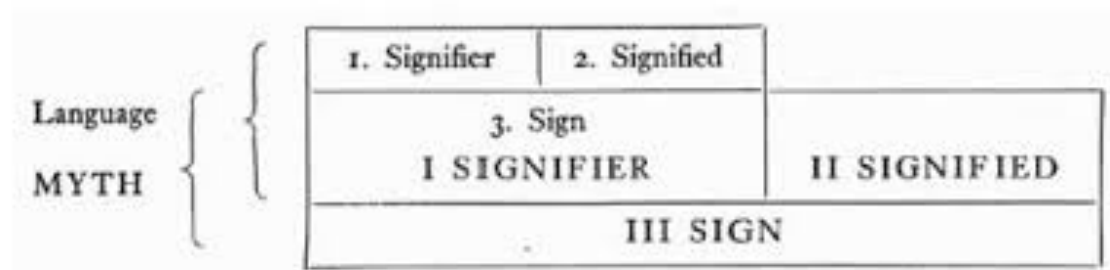
Resemantization:

The use of positive or neutral Spanish terms are risgnified in humorous or negative senses

- The *macho* issue

Erasure:

process through which ideology, by simplifying the sociolinguistic field, renders some sociolinguistic phenomena invisible

Barthes' Myth

1. Signifier	2. Signified	
3. Sign / I SIGNIFIER		II SIGNIFIED
III SIGN		

Language
MYTH

Intertextuality, resemantization and erasure, distorts Spanish language (first-order semiotic system) to give rise to Mock Spanish (signifier in mythical semiotic system) and to its link to the negative stereotype regarding Spanish speakers (mythical signified).

Iconization is naturalized: "Spanish speakers are disorderly? It's just a fact: hear how do they speak!"

Transformist Hegemony (Williams 1977)

Linguistic domain is reached through assimilation and appropriation of elements of heterogeneity.

By ideologically appropriating and *marking* the disordered features of Spanish in the practice of Mocking Spanish, English speakers actually distance themselves from that, and for opposition impose their language as the *unmarked* norm, the silent order.

White public space (1):

For white speakers:

- "Whites permit themselves a considerable amount of disorder precisely at the language boundary that is a site of discipline for [Spanish]." (Hill 1998, 682).

- White people speaking "Spanish" indexes a colloquial persona, and doing that in the most possible disorderly way (Mock Spanish) is fundamental to reach this positive presentation of the self.

White public space (2):

For non-white speakers

- In the public space speaking Spanish is considered impolite (not normative)

- Differences between Spanish and English are''sharply objectified''. The two languages have to be kept ''in strict order'' (Urciuoli 1996: 36)

- Spanish speakers are pushed to reach ''English correctness'' in the public space

Fractal recursivity:

Non-White Speaker = Disorder	White Speaker = Order	
Spanish language = Disorder		English language = Order

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