

Language in Society 52 (2023)
doi:10.1017/S004740452300074X

AVINERI NETTE & JESSE HARASTA (eds.), *Metalinguistic communities: Case studies of agency, ideology, and symbolic uses of language*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021. Pp. xvii, 264. Pb. €100.

Reviewed by OLAMIDE ENIOLA 

Department of Anthropology, Tulane University
Dinwiddie Hall
6823 St Charles Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70118, USA
oeniola@tulane.edu

Metalinguistic communities: Case studies of agency, ideology, and symbolic uses of language, edited by Avineri Nette & Jesse Harasta, is a collection of papers that discuss the symbolic uses of language by speakers of minoritized languages. Keeping with the sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropological nature of the volume, its contributors use ethnography to explore ‘agency, ideology, semiotics, and community in metalinguistic communities’ (2), showing how discourses, interactions, and practices intersect with the symbolic roles of minoritized language in diverse communities. The central argument this volume makes is that, aside from the goals of fluency and communication norms, minoritized language preservation and use are a political act mobilized as a symbol of identity, belonging, and ideology, a claim that resonates with the *metalinguistic community* framework adopted in the volume.

The book is comprised of twelve chapters, including an introductory chapter by the editors and an afterword chapter by Wesley Leonard. The four chapters following the introduction discuss language as a tool for defining belonging. For instance, Quentin Boitel, relying on the Náhuat language initiatives, offers a critical perspective on proficiency, arguing that it is not only about how to speak one language but also about language ideology, imagined identities, and a series of semiotic, historical, and political processes which differentiate between ‘authentic and fraudulent indigenities’ (67). Similarly, Sabina M. Perrino argues that Venetan language revitalization and the Lega Nord’s initiatives are politicized, promoting various degrees of intimacy among co-national speech participants in Veneto while excluding non-fluent others through political signage.

The following three chapters in this volume examine language as a defense against erasure. Given the Tehuelche’s determination to prevent their language from going into extinction, Javier Domingo observes that speakers now show off with the language. Consequently, Domingo argues that language reclamation cannot be about the language but about speakers’ connection to and creativity with the language. In his defense of the Kernewek language movement and its fragile metalinguistic community, Jesse Harasta argues that the movement’s failure to achieve a stable speech community makes sense when one understands

other non-linguistic goals and ideologies which language achieves. The final three chapters focus on language as a tool for mediating with the state. Sandra Keller opines that recognizing Gallo as a language (other minority languages inclusive) and having a positive affect towards it, despite French hegemony, is as crucial as speaking it in language advocacy. Referencing language as a semiotic object by which qualities of language index persons and communities, Jessica López-Espino argues that the racialized labeling of Spanish speakers by court actors reinforces negative stereotypes about Spanish-dominant speakers in US courts.

This volume offers both insider and outsider perspectives about metalinguistic communities, using concepts such as linguistic objectification, ethnolinguistic infusion, linguistic reindigenization, nostalgia socialization, and raciolinguistics, among others, by which speakers of minoritized languages show enthusiasm for their language and differentiate themselves from outsiders, and how outsiders differentiate against insiders—thus foregrounding speakers' agency. Linguistic anthropologists, sociolinguists, and anyone working on language revitalization and second language acquisition will find the volume helpful.

(Received 1 August 2023)

Language in Society 52 (2023)
doi:10.1017/S0047404523000775

PETER J. ADAMS, *Monster metaphors: When rhetoric runs amok*. New York: Routledge, 2023. Pp. 258. Hb. \$144. Pb. \$40.45.

Reviewed by MICHAEL HANNE 

Independent Scholar

623 Mahurangi West Rd, RD 3, Warkworth

New Zealand

m.hanne@auckland.ac.nz

This book draws our attention to 'monster metaphors' that have gained illegitimate domination of discourse in certain domains, such that our conception of the field is dangerously narrowed. The spheres of public discourse in which the author finds such metaphors reigning are: mental health, economics, the sciences, and gender relations.

The opening chapter tells an engaging story of how monster metaphors rampage over the discursive landscape, destroying rival metaphors at every turn. Chapter 2 reviews the main theories of metaphor and explains the author's preference for seeing the connotations of one domain being 'mapped' on to another domain. Chapter 3 shows how major metaphors are buttressed by associated instances of synecdoche and metonymy that tie the metaphor into its context. Chapter 4 highlights the creative potential of metaphor for explaining complex topics and stimulating our imaginative faculties, and chapter 5 outlines how a metaphor 'turns nasty' and grows, like a cancer, to reign over the whole domain.

Language in Society 52:5 (2023)

917