A "Brutology" of Bozal: Tracing a Discourse Genealogy from Nineteenth-Century Blackface Theater to Twenty-First-Century Spirit Possession in Cuba

KRISTINA WIRTZ

Anthropology, Western Michigan University

Crispín: *Esos escollos que exasperan su fantasía solo se encuentran en esos desgracia-dos séres de los estranjeros climas de Africa.* (Those pitfalls that exasperate their fantasy are only to be found in those disgraceful beings from the foreign climates of Africa.)

Aniceto: *No hablemos de esos ignorantes individuos! …¡Lástima me dá su incultura y el grado de brutología en que se encuentran, en comparancia de nuestros conocimien-tos científicos!* (Let us not speak of those ignorant individuals! … It pains me so their lack of culture and the degree of brutology in which they are found, in comparativization with our scientific knowledge!)

———*Los Negros Catedráticos*, Fernandez 1868: 5

A common mode of racial disparagement in Cuba, and elsewhere, is stereoty-pification and mockery of the denigrated race's speech. The epigraph above gives an example from the nineteenth-century Cuban *teatro bufo*, or comic theater, in which two Black Cuban characters disparage Africans, from

800

whom they clearly distance themselves based on their superior education, but they do so in such over-exalted terms that the farce mocks them as well, revealing them to be just as ignorant as other Black characters in the play who at least demonstrate appropriate humbleness by delivering their lines in another non-standard register known as Bozal Spanish. These sorts of comic dialogues, typically performed in blackface by White actors and employing a stock of character types that became familiar to audiences, helped to create a recognizable speech genre or *register* for voices of Blackness that have superceded and outlasted the *bufo* theatrical genre, a process linguistic anthropologists call *enregisterment*.[1]

My particular focus here is Bozal, a label for a social category and the speech register attributed to it: I will begin with an intentionally vague definition of Bozal as a low-prestige, nonstandard speech register that Cubans associate with enslaved Africans, once referred to in the Spanish-speaking world of transatlantic slavery as *Bozales* (English: Bozals). African Bozals would have learned Spanish as a second language under the harsh conditions of slavery, in contrast to *criollos* born into slavery in places like Cuba and thus exposed to Spanish as a first language. Hence, Bozal is, at first glance, the speech of African Bozals of Cuba's past, but this is precisely the equation I am going to critique here, in order to more closely examine the processes of enregisterment by which a relatively open-ended series of linguistic features understood to be nonstandard came to index an historically particular persona of the enslaved African. The association is tight enough that the notion of Bozal as the speech of Africans of the past continues to robustly circulate in Cuba today, and particularly in folk religious speech practices.

Exemplars of and metadiscourses about Bozal appear in an abundance of genres of written text and performance, contributing to the multimodal symphony of signs that have over-determined figures of Blackness and Afro-Cuban culture in Cuba, and that have persisted long after slavery's belated abolition there in 1886. Bozal, like many other markers of Blackness in Cuba, contributes to a distinctive chronotope, or construction of space-time, of Cuba's past as a slaveholding Spanish colony.[2] Bozal exemplifies how Cubans make this aspect of their national historical imagination relevant to modern negotiations of postcolonial racial and linguistic orders. Because Bozal indexes a specifically Black voice, it contributes to the ongoing racialization of people

---

[1] Throughout this article I capitalize "Black" and "Blackness" to signal that these are politically significant constructs on a par with being Cuban or American, that there is no privileged "neutral" stance apart from ongoing racialization processes, and that I align myself with the politics of Blackness. Similarly, I capitalize "White" and "Whiteness" to highlight the hegemonic power of this racialized position and its dialectic co-construction with Blackness in the last half-millennium of the Atlantic World.

[2] Bakhtin (1981) introduced the notion of "chronotope" to describe the discursive construction of particular space-time subjectivities.

of African descent, a long-term process of creating and naturalizing hierarchies of group differences to justify inequality. Bozal functions as a register by virtue of pointing back to the ongoing relevance of the time of slavery, situating Africanness in that era, and connecting modern-day cultural forms marked as Black, such as Afro-Cuban religious practices using Bozal, to that chronotope of Cuba's colonial past.

In this small project of discourse history, I trace some of the moments involved in Bozal's emergence as a "voice" of Blackness, arguing that Bozal was enregistered *not* along a speech chain originating in actual slave speech, but rather through a web of interdiscursive strands creating the highly racialized *figure* of the African slave in the White Cuban imagination. The stage characters of Crispín and Aniceto are also part of this web, along with other figurations of Blackness from theater, literature, and folk religious practices alike. Folklorists and linguists, too, are implicated in this interdiscursive web.

I have been studying Cuban folk religion and its representations in folklore performance in the eastern Cuban city of Santiago de Cuba since 1998, where I first became aware of a variety of speech known as Bozal. It is used in religious ceremonies in which deities and spirits of the dead (*orichas* and *muertos*) take possession of their devotees' bodies and speak to other participants. Once I began paying attention, I also encountered instances of Bozal in staged folklore performances and various genres of folkloric and popular song lyrics, and ritual speech. In my experience, Bozal usage is limited to these kinds of performance contexts; one almost never encounters everyday speech that Cubans would identify as Bozal, although colloquial Spanish features overlap with Bozalisms. Most often, tokens of Bozal speech co-occur with other emblems marking an historical African persona. (See Figure 1, showing the maroon, a quintessentially Black heroic national figure of resistance in Cuba; Routon 2008).

Indeed, it has long struck me that there is something uncomfortably akin to racist caricature in the bulging-eyed, savage performances of spirit possession—and even more so in folkloric renditions—as much as my Cuban interlocutors insist to me that such behaviors signal authenticity and veracity. Consider a spirit possession I observed during a state-sponsored folklore festival in the town of El Cobre in 2006, in which a well-known medium was possessed by his African *muerto* during a ceremony to commemorate marronage. Wandering through the crowd of onlookers on the fringe of the scheduled performance of *oricha* dances from Santería, the possessed man was confronted by a skeptical Mexican tourist, who stood directly in front of him, arms folded, gazing intently at him. Looking up at the tourist, the *muerto* explained to him: "*Yo son bruta*"—"I are brutish," where the misconjugated verb and the lack of gender agreement marked his utterance as in Bozal and confirmed him as a Bozal from Cuba's colonial, slaving past.

FIGURE 1   A typical folkloric and religious personification of Bozal speakers: members of the folk-lore group 1802 de Orozco perform as spirits of *Congos cimarrones*, or escaped African slaves, during a state-sponsored folklore festival in El Cobre, Cuba, July 2006. Author's photo.

The *muerto*'s claim to brutishness echoes with the earlier denigrations of Africans' "degree of brutology" voiced by two of the nineteenth-century Cuban theater's best known blackface characters, Aniceto and Crispín, particularly in the way linguistic features marked as nonstandard are deployed to naturalize this attribution of so-called Black "brutology." Such resonances across this expanse of time and genre have led me to ask how the racializing imaginaries of the nineteenth-century might continue to echo in brutish African *muertos* of today—an instance of what I describe elsewhere as a Cuban chronotope of Blackness as "the timeless past among us" (Wirtz 2011). In what follows, I will consider a sampling of prominent scholarly and theatrical sources not only because these are the only possible archival traces of Bozal, but also because they overwhelmingly comprise the corpus cited in current scholarly discussions of Bozal, particularly in the context of Afro-Hispanic literature, lin-guistics, and creole studies. These sources provide examples and commentaries that cite and build on one another through time and across genres, thereby serving an important metalinguistic function in enregistering Bozal as a voice of Blackness in Cuba. The enregisterment of speech varieties is never just about language: the genealogies of Bozal traced here contribute to the ongoing history of racialization giving meaning to Blackness in Cuba and the wider Atlantic World.

Given how ideologically saturated Blackness is and perhaps always has been in the Cuban historical imagination, and given the various contexts of Bozal's appearance, from comic theater type to voice of the *muertos*, it seems premature to treat exemplars of Bozal as what they might seem to be: transparent and decontextualizable tokens of a time-transcending register of African slave speech that can be extracted for comparison of their linguistic features. Linguists such as Lipski (2005: 145, and see 5–8), while sensitive to the possible inaccuracies and exaggerations of some texts, argue that the "high degree of consistency" in their representations of Bozal points to a "common denominator" in actual slave speech. I argue that another explanation is possible if we consider the reflexive and performative effects of what linguistic anthropologists call metalinguistic (and by extension, metacultural) attention. These are practices that reflect on other practices—in short, speech about speech is metalinguistic; cultural attention to cultural forms and practices is metacultural (see Silverstein 1993; Urban 2001). If we focus on the metalinguistic and metacultural effects of the historical corpus of "Bozal," and on how earlier instantiations may have influenced later ones—through what is known as interdiscursivity—we discover that the "common denominator" is at the metacultural level of those interdiscursive comparisons.

Consider how the comic theater character Aniceto ventriloquates condescending and mocking views of African "brutology" common in Cuban slaveholding society, even as his own overreaching turns of phrase put the joke on him, so that these figures of comic theater are parodies, doubled-voiced from the start, and therefore conveying more information about the White Cuban playwrights and audiences of the time than about enslaved, or free, Africans. And yet, too many scholars, despite recognizing the parody, have accepted this chronotope of unchanging Blackness and have for that reason mined nineteenth-century texts for evidence of enslaved Africans' "Bozal" speech. I think that such efforts, rather than discovering real evidence for or against various theories regarding the Caribbean's "missing Spanish creole languages," have instead contributed to the enregisterment of a time-transcending category of Bozal as something recognizable in literary traces of the past and ritual performances of the present alike. My argument is a preliminary inquiry into what insights we can gain by treating Bozal speech and its written traces in archives and literature as Bakhtin would have it: as a nontransparent medium through which social orders are not simply reflected, but actively constructed.

I will trace some of the moments involved in how Bozal has emerged as a "voice" of Blackness, and propose an alternative to the predominant view of the language, that it has become enregistered *not* along a speech chain originating in actual slave speech, but rather through an interdiscursive web centered on the metaculturally powerful and highly racialized *persona* of the African slave. The stage characters of Crispín and Aniceto are part of this web, along with other

figurations of Blackness from theater, literature, folk religious practices, and possibly other discourse domains I do not consider here.

BOZAL IN THE CONTEXT OF RACIAL PARODY

The enregisterment of Bozal as the voice of (brutish) Blackness is part of a much larger story of racialization of Africans that has unfolded across half a millennium, and the world brought into being during that span. In the nexus of Western epistemic, economic, and moral orders that "invented Africa" and created the racialized category of "Africans" (Appiah 1992; Mudimbe 1988; 1994), one small but significant contribution has been the circulation of a distinctive, usually parodied "African" voice. From Cervantes, through the mid-nineteenth- to mid-twentieth-century heyday of "blackface" entertainments such as minstrelsy, to modern instantiations of Mock-Ebonics in the United States, there are countless instances in which a voice of "Blackness" has been ventriloquated, caricatured, and then denigrated according to what, borrowing from the blackface comic dialogue in the epigraph, I ironically call a trope of "brutology." Although I focus narrowly on the trajectory of one such voice, Bozal, in Cuba, in doing so I do not mean to suggest that Cuban Bozal is or has ever been isolated from racializing currents across the Atlantic World (see Hartikainen 2008, for a Brazilian example). While a fully comparative analysis must wait for another occasion, I will point out some connections that promise deeper insight into the dynamics of racialization at work in not only the Cuban case, but elsewhere as well.

Lately, a variety of contemporary mocking registers have received serious analytical attention. Jane Hill's pioneering work on Mock Spanish laid out the basic premises of subsequent work on other racializing mocking or "mock" forms (Hill 1993). Most important is the parodic voicing of mocking forms, in which speakers use an ironic or disparaging stance to distance themselves from identification with a marked social voice they deploy. Related to this are the linguistic features framed as tokens of the disparaged register, which tend to be a few widely recognized forms—shibboleths—that often do not accurately reproduce actual, non-mocking speech practices of the disparaged group. These socially charged tokens are re-contextualized by association with negative, or at least extremely limited, personal or group attributes drawn from widely-circulating racial stereotypes. Ronkin and Karn's (1999) example of Mock African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) in overtly racist web sites shows how stigmatized tokens taken to represent AAVE, such as double negatives, are associated with ugly stereotypes such as lack of education and criminality, to create what most Americans would recognize as an explicitly racist caricature of African Americans. This is in contrast to Hill's Mock-Spanish examples, in which the racializing consequences for Latinos are much less explicit and more deniable, because more or less stylized tokens of Spanish are associated with a light-hearted, humorous, fun-loving,

and even cosmopolitan Anglo, English-speaking persona. Nonetheless, the way in which Mock Spanish re-circulates associations between Spanish and a laid-back or lazy, trivialized, party-loving, and even law-breaking persona, often through intertextual chains of implicature, accomplishes much the same racializing work as do more overtly racist mocking forms (Hill 1993; 2001; 2005; 2008).

Recently, more complex voicing effects have been described for mocking forms. Chun (2009), for example, explores critical re-appropriations of Mock Asian by an Asian American comedian. Roth-Gordon (2011) examines the inevitable leakage across even the most robust attempts to distance a (White) speaker from the (non-White) persona of a mocking form he or she voices. She argues that such disorderly discourses are inherently asymmetrical, since Whites apparently suffer only momentary linguistic "contamination" in using Mock forms, while even non-White speakers who linguistically "discipline" themselves can never lose the taint of their bodily non-Whiteness. In the same issue of *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, Gaudio (2011) argues that linguistic appropriations of stigmatized voices where speakers align with, rather than distance themselves from, the marked voice can subvert some of the disparaging associations even while making use of the racializing effects—for example using AAVE forms in association with Nigerian Pidgin to index shared claims to transatlantic Blackness through "broken English." For that matter, White British youth and young White American hip hop fans have been shown to claim alignment with Blackness through their admiring, rather than mocking, appropriations of "hip" markers of "Black" speech (Cutler 2003; Rampton 1995), and groups construed as non-White, such as Dominican American and Laotian American teens, strategically deploy AAVE and mainstream U.S. English features to negotiate their racialized positionings (Bailey 2001; Bucholtz 2009).

Although the rich scholarship on Anglophone, and particularly American blackface minstrelsy has rarely attended to the workings of language, it has provided abundant examples of all of these forms of voicing, albeit sometimes too hastily describing texts such as song lyrics, characterizations, plays, and even advertisements as imitating what is assumed at face value to be Black dialect or West Indian English (e.g., Mahar 1999; Nathan 1962). Eric Lott (1993) has compellingly argued that mid-nineteenth-century American blackface entertainments reveal moments both of social distancing from Blackness, which were part of immigrant efforts to assimilate to the privileges of Whiteness, and of desire for and admiration of Blackness, in a context of extreme racism and racial intimacy. While Mahar (1999) has critiqued Lott's analysis as giving a psychological reading too far from the social contexts of blackface performance, he has also argued that White performers used blackface, and voice, as a "disguise" and "vehicle" for social critique of dominant views and parodies of a much wider range of social types than just African

Americans. Chude-Sokei (2006) has developed the theme of disguise and "masking" to describe the use of blackface by Black performers as a medium for heightening and critiquing the "double consciousness" imposed by a racist society. He does so in his biography of the early-twentieth-century Black superstar Egbert Austin Williams, whose blackface virtuosity on the eve of the Harlem Renaissance ensured his erasure from theater and pop culture history. Chude-Sokei's focus on "black on black" minstrelsy highlights both the distinction between and the interpenetration of processes of self-identification and interpellation, subjectivity and subjectification.

The range of uses and effects of racial parody clearly show the significance of metalinguistic awareness in the stylistic choices of speakers and perceptions of their interlocutors—for example, in the very identification of a parodic theatrical style as "the speech of plantation slaves." The recent body of work on contemporary mocking registers also demonstrates the larger point that language styles cannot neatly be matched to social identifications, and that the normal state of linguistic affairs is complex in its heteroglossia (see Agha 2006; Coupland 2007). Meek (2006) gives a telling example of interpellation from a recent Hollywood film, in which one character's Native American identity is crudely established for film audiences in part by another non-Native character's use of Hollywood "Injun" English in addressing him (right before inflicting unspeakable violence against him), and in part by his silent response, construed as an index of stereotypical "Indian stoicism." When a recognizable linguistic style does come to tightly index a particular social persona, like AAVE and Mock-AAVE index different takes on the meaning of Blackness, or White-invented Hollywood Injun English indexes a stereotyped figure of Native Americans, we must investigate how this happens. But in doing so, we must take care not to collapse representations, mocking forms, and actual speech of members of these groups into each other. We need to look instead for moments of interdiscursivity: citation, imitation, appropriation, and re-appropriation, whether they are acknowledged or not.

The modal use of Bozal in Cuba today to voice the presence of an historical African figure during spirit possession ceremonies is clearly not a mocking form, nor, for that matter, are most of the staged folklore performances of Bozal. In these cases, Bozal does mark a distancing between animator and author/principal speaking roles, but for the purpose of manifesting a spirit's presence in the body of a human host (see Du Bois 1992; Irvine 1982; Keane 1997), where the relationship is one of power and respect, not of irony, parody, or disparagement. Nevertheless, by tracing the historical context of these contemporary instantiations of Bozal, I aim to show that Bozal's trajectory includes genealogical links to the quintessentially and overtly mocking form of blackface comedy that complicate its indexical effects in the present. A consideration of the discourse history that gave rise to Bozal raises questions about how we should model interdiscursivity

across larger scales of time and space, in light of longstanding questions about the effects of metalinguistic awareness and the "indeterminacy of contextualization" (Cameron 1995; Gumperz 1992; Silverstein 1981; 2001). Our answers to these questions have implications for how we go about defining a register like Bozal.

BOZAL, METACULTURAL AWARENESS, AND WEBS OF INTERDISCURSIVITY

The earliest canonical Spanish writers in the age of Cervantes were already representing parodied "African" speech, influenced by an emerging Portuguese literary genre of *fala de preto* ("Black speech") (Lipski 2005). African "types" joined in the dialogic play of voices in popular comedic theater and song, both secular and religious, at the dawn of the "Atlantic World." The "father of Spanish theater," Lope de Rueda (1510–1565), featured Africans speaking a distinctive register in his comic dialogues. Scarcely a generation later, the poet Quevedo (1590–1645) mocked the already established comic formula of representing "the Guinea tongue by changing the r's into l's and the l's into r's, thus Francisco = Flansico" (Stevenson 1994: 485–86). Numerous popular religious songs of Iberia and the New World colonies, the *villancicos* of the seventeenth century, were called *negros* or *negrillos* because they animated rustic "African" voices. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, of late-seventeenth-century New Spain, employed a kit of dialectal markers and invented "Africanisms" that would be as recognizable among twentieth- and twenty-first-century purveyors of Bozalisms as to Cervantes and his era. Her "Africanisms"— expressions like "*gurugú*" and "*he he he cambulé*"—mark one moment in a history of characterizing African voices with nonsense words.[3] Even in making a case for mining these texts as "sources of evidence on earlier Afro-Hispanic speech," Lipski sums up these Golden Age *Bozal* characters as "frozen stereotypes" (2005: 93). Centuries later, twentieth-century Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén employed similar-sounding vocables in poems like "Canto negro" from 1931 (Guillén 1972, vol. 1: 122; Stevenson 1994):

¡Yambambó, yambambé!	*Yambambó, yambambé*!
Repica el congo solongo,	Rings the *congo solongo*,
repica el negro bien negro;	rings the very black black;
congo solongo del Songo	*congo solongo* from Songo
baila yambó sobre un pie.	dances *yambó* on one foot.

---

[3] Nathan's (1962) study of seventeenth-century English blackface entertainments gives numerous examples of vocables characterizing African voices in songs. David Samuels (2004), describing a very different historical moment of vocables in doo-wop, situates this popular music genre in a longer history of modernity in which "nonsense" words, marking a contrastive non-modern stance within modernity, have systematically been attributed to marginalized groups, from children to slaves to colonized peoples.

While Guillén's vocables speak to a specific early-twentieth-century context in which self-consciously national forms of cultural production were drawing upon then-current theories of the "transculturation" of African, European, and other "roots," they perpetuated what had become a several-century tradition of voicing the "African" as primitive Other. Through the trajectories of colonialism and postcolonialism, including genres of theater, literature, and scholarship, African figures and Bozal speech have circulated widely. Bozal voices continue to circulate not only in Cuba, but also even in sites where other traces of the African diaspora have been otherwise scrubbed from the national historical consciousness. In Uruguay, for example, Montevidean Carnival *comparsas*(ensembles) of "*negros lubolos*" feature blackface performers in a nation that defines itself as a product of European immigration, and in contradistinction to Black Uruguayan troupes known as *llamadas* that specifically perform an alignment to Blackness in Black neighborhoods (Andrews 2007: xiv, 59, passim; Remedi 2004).

Bozal thus emerged among Europeans as a parodic representation of Africans, a usage that has continued. Parodies require a doubling of voices—a ventriloquation, as Bakhtin puts it—where one voice evaluates a co-present voice. The comic dialogue in the epigraph is a good example, especially considering that the playwright himself first performed the role of Aniceto (in blackface, of course). Linguists seeking the "missing Spanish creole" have sought to reconstruct "original" slave speech from today's Bozal and from nineteenth-century sources like comic plays. I assert that they are on the wrong track, and that we must attend to the less obvious evaluative voice, which implies an alternative interdiscursive trajectory, not necessarily exclusive of actual African voices, but problematic for any straightforward reading of those voices in historical Bozal texts.

The analysis I am developing here moves between the micro-discursive focus on communicative events and the *longue durée* of historical-cultural movement in order to consider the enregisterment of Bozal as a racializing process. The very term "enregisterment" refers to the reflexive social processes through which "cultural models of speech" emerge and can be traced historically (Agha 2003; 2006). Enregisterment occurs at the interdiscursive level, when events in the stream of discourse become recognizable instances of a social voice indexing a particular social persona. When the indexical link between type of person and speech style becomes tight enough at the metalinguistic level (if not necessarily in practice; see Ochs 1992), we can call that speech style a register, whether or not it goes by a particular label—legalese, baby talk, Bozal.

There are two particular issues I want to explore in some detail. The first is the recognition of resemblance across moments of replication that is required for a generic type to become salient *as* a type. To attend to this issue of iconicity is to raise questions about how the conditions of interdiscursivity are shaped by

different degrees or types of metapragmatic awareness of the similarities linking disparate moments of discourse, with or without expressly metacultural awareness, such as objectifying a cultural form to make it available for commentary. Consider the process of tracing out discourse histories to link events across time and genre: What are the ramifications to social actors' ability to recognize when interdiscursivity occurs? What are the "limits of awareness" in determining that two separate instances of discourse are iconically linked (Silverstein 1981; 2001; 2003)?

To speak of processes of entextualization and enregisterment, then, is to posit that a fundamental similarity or set of similarities is recognized in comparing two or more semiotic events. The recognition of a "family resemblance" links disparate discourse events to each other, and, if the entextualization is robust, to an abstract and extractable "type," such as a recognizable social persona, interactional trope, code, genre, or register (Bauman 1998). That is, the similarity that serves as a basis for an interdiscursive link must be culturally meaningful within some interpretive frame in order to be recognized (Agha 2006: 78; Irvine 2005: 24, and others in the same 2005 special issue of *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*). It follows that some degree of metapragmatic awareness is required for the recognition of any particular case of interdiscursivity, but we know that metapragmatic function often does not require fully articulated metadiscursive awareness that would allow for conscious reflection on the phenomenon. We also know how fickle, incomplete, and misdirected metadiscursive awareness can be, precisely because it is saturated by ideologies, linguistic and otherwise (Agha 2006; Irvine and Gal 2000; Irvine 2008; Silverstein 1993; 2003). For this reason, we can describe many racializing discourses as covert or tacit: their racializing functions in replicating signifiers of racial difference go unrecognized by those participating in their circulation (Dick and Wirtz 2011).

There is something fundamentally open-ended about interdiscursivity: iconicities linking two discourse events can be discovered at any moment, and likewise, such similarities can also be disavowed, ignored, or erased, depending upon the chronotopic horizon in which discourse events and types are being compared. Elsewhere I have demonstrated how Cuban signifiers of Blackness in folklore performance index a chronotope of colonial nostalgia that expressly links Blackness in the present to colonial-era figurations of Africans (Wirtz 2011). Scholars, too, in our role as metaculture specialists, also engage historically-specific metacultural frameworks in our analyses of interdiscursivity: we may find that some interdiscursive links form historical chains, allowing us to reconstruct discourse histories—histories of uptake and circulation, for example, through which particular speech registers emerge and become salient.

But what of the shifting metacultural awareness of those who reproduce features indexing a recognizable register? How are they negotiating—by

expanding or narrowing—the inevitable intertextual gaps? I want to focus, for now, on the dynamics connecting interdiscursivity to the creation of event-internal metacultural models of discourse history. Asif Agha (2006: 72–73) discusses how some interactional events formulate "virtual models" of their own socio-historical situation, and points out such models may or may not bear much resemblance to empirically verifiable discourse histories. One such virtual model is the chronotope relegating Blackness to "the timeless past," wherein emblems such as Bozal speech, slave dress, and even movements and gestures are understood to be unproblematic icons of actual slave speech, dress, movements, and gestures. Just how has this semiotic time warp, linking signs of Blackness to this particular imagined slave persona, become so over-determined?

This brings me to the second issue I wish to explore here: I wish to reconsider the metaphor of "speech chains," and offer instead the more complex metaphor of interdiscursive "webs." Speech chains are a powerful idea in a semiotically informed, diachronic study of discourse, and one traceable in linguistic anthropology's own discourse history to Saussure, who provided the famous basic diagram of what he called the "speech circuit" (1996: 11) (see Figure 2). He pointed out "the linearity of time" inherent in linguistic signals (ibid.: 70), and introduced a theoretical apparatus for delimiting the semiologically meaningful divisions in sound sequences. This apparatus includes "compar[ing] series of phrases in which the same unit occurs" in order to segment the flow of speech-sound (ibid.: 103). Recognizing similar units separated in time is fundamental to our ability to segment the stream of speech into meaningful chunks. Note in Figure 2 that the basic unit of his "speech circuit" consists of a speaker and receiver, with the two perhaps alternating roles.

The contemporary idea of discourse chains, deriving also from Hilary Putnam and Saul Kripke's work on meaning and reference, allows us to shift scale from the temporality within unfolding interactions to that across interactions comprising longer-term discourses, and even across the *longue durée*, thereby tracing how semiotic objects—names, for example—are constituted across socio-historical chains of reference. An example of the speech chain model is Asif Agha's (2003) study of the enregisterment of British Received Pronunciation. Figure 3 shows that Agha's diagram is in essence an elaboration of Saussure's diagram, to represent links connecting multiple

FIGURE 2   Saussure's basic unit, the speech circuit, reproduced from Saussure (1996: 11).
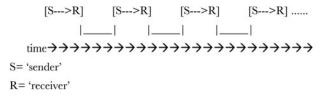
FIGURE 3   Asif Agha's speech chain model (after Agha 2003: 247, Fig. 2).

speaking events. I think the metaphor of a chain is misleading, however, in being too linear for the multiple reticulations that produce what look more like interdiscursive webs. Metaphors matter as models, and the kinds of rich analyses of unfolding discourse that describe multiple cultural movements, indexical orders, and scales of context are better described using the less linear and teleological, more open-ended "web" metaphor.

But even the metaphor of a "web" has its limitations: it may be too static a structure to capture the open-endedness of real-time contextualization processes, in which new juxtapositions, such as those I will presently propose for spirit possession speech, invoke new orders of indexicality. Another potential replacement metaphor is that of discourse genealogies: ideologies of lineage direct our attention toward some lines of descent over others, but of course, with each subsequent generation, the number of ancestors doubles (two parents, four grandparents, and on). To apply the genealogy metaphor to the Bakhtinian "echoes" of prior speech in each subsequent speech event, this tension between the potential number of earlier speech occurrences that could influence a current speech event and those actually recognized as relevant is precisely what my metaphor of discourse genealogies seeks to highlight.

BOZAL'S ENREGISTERMENT IN CUBA

"Bozal" is derived from the Spanish word for "mouth." Its semantic range includes "wild" and "untamed," "ignorant," and also "dog muzzle" and "bridle bit" as instruments of control. This label, with its polyvalent attention to speech and social control, was applied to African-born slaves (but not Iberian- or creole-born slaves), and it seems to have been in use in Spain and the colonies at least from the sixteenth century (Alonso 1958; Covarrubios Orozco 2006 [1611]). Early on, the term also came to refer to the way that such Africans would have spoken Spanish, which has been consistently characterized, over hundreds of years and into the present, with terms such as "mixed up," "corrupted," "defective," and "ugly."[4]

---

[4] Ortiz López (1998: 129) reports a very similar list in how his elderly Cuban informants in the 1990s described the speech of slaves: "*enreda'o, tragiversa'o, extraño, distinto, feo, mal habla'o, extranjero, bozal, cruzado, al revés*" ("mixed up, twisted, odd, distinct, ugly, badly spoken, foreign,

An early mention of Bozal in Cuba's historical record is a call by Havana's new bishop in the 1750s for Catholic priests to learn Bozal, if not African languages (cited in Castellanos 1990: 71). Bozal received increasing metacultural attention with the vast growth in Cuba's slavery economy due to the sugarcane agriculture boom on the island after the 1790s. Whereas in 1792 slaves comprised about 31 percent of the population (87,000 out of 270,000), in 1827 the slave population alone had increased to 287,000, or about 41 percent of the total population of 700,000 (Bergad 2007: 17–18; Bergad, Iglesias García, and Barcia 1995: 39). Over time, a substantial free colored population arose, and by the 1862 census there were some 370,000 slaves and 200,000 free people of color, totaling 44 percent of Cuba's population of 1,400,000 (Bergad 2007: 10; see also Curtin 1969; Kiple 1976; Murray 1971). Abolition came late and gradually to Cuba, being completed in 1886.

A catechism published in Havana in 1797, the "Explanation of Christian Doctrine Adjusted to the Capacities of Bozal Blacks," advised priests to speak slowly and teach African slaves to enunciate words correctly. The author, Havana priest Nicolás Duque de Estrada, refers to "that language that they use without cases, without types, without conjunctions, without agreement, without order" (Laviña 1989: 66, 118; my translation). These characterizations of non-European language are, of course, all familiar enough from countless other cases of European colonial linguistics (for an early critique, see Boas 1974 [1889]).

Another elite commentary comes from Cuban geographer Estebán Pichardo y Tapia, who in 1836 published a dictionary of Cuban Spanish that included examples of Bozal, which he characterized as consisting of "grammar defects and sound changes" that created a "disfigured Castilian." Below is a sampling of his textual representation of Bozal, together with my attempt at a more standard Spanish gloss, in the second line, to indicate what is marked as disfigured in his version, and my English translation in the third line. Pichardo y Tapia did not himself provide a gloss of his example, suggesting that he might have thought its denotational meaning to be clear to readers despite the many nonstandard orthographic forms he deploys to represent this speech style. Indeed, his heavy use of eye dialect (textual representations of nonstandard speech) suggests that he expected his audience of literate elites to already recognize Bozal. I indicate my uncertainties with parentheses in the glosses:

1. *yo mi ñama Frasico Mandinga, nenglito reburujaoro, crabo musuamo ño Mingué*
   yo me llamo Francisco Mandinga, negrito (reburujador?), esclavo mi su amo Don Miguel

---

bozal, crossed, and backwards"), and Testa's (2004) informants also characterized Bozal speech as "mixed up."

my name is Franscisco Mandinga (out of place?)[5] little black, slave, my master[6] Don [honorific] Miguel

2. *de la Cribanerí, branco como carabon, suña como nan gato,*
   de la (carbonería?), blanco como carbón, las uñas como un gato,
   of the (coal yard?), white like charcoal, nails like a cat,

3. *poco poco mirá oté cribi papele toro ri toro ri,*
   hace poco miro a Usted escribiendo papeles toro ri toro ri [nonsense vocables]
   for a while I watch you writing papers blah-blah-blah[7]

4. *Frasico dale dinele, non gurbia dinele, e laja cabesa,*
   Fransisco le da dinero, (está agobiado?)[8] dinero y raja la cabeza,
   Francisco gives him money, the money (is not sufficient?), and breaks his head,

5. *e bebe guariente, e coje la cuelo, guanta qui guanta*
   y bebo aguardiente, y me coge el cuero, aguanto aquí aguanto
   and I drink cane liquor, and get the whip, I endure here I endure[9]

We do not know how Pichardo y Tapia produced this sample, nor from what source or sources, but note that the marked phonological, lexical, and grammatical features of this passage, as represented orthographically anyway, are in keeping with later representations of Bozal. He provides examples of phonological substitutions, including "r" for "l" and "l" for "r" (already noted in Spain, we have seen, and today described as typical of colloquial Cuban speech), phonological elisions, nonstandard verb conjugation, and a few other markedly non-normative syntactic features such as reduplication for emphasis or intensification (e.g., "*poco poco*" in line 3). Note, too, that this text is presented as a first-person account by a Bozal-speaker, in which markers of Bozal speech co-occur with stereotypical semantic indications of slave existence: his surname "Mandinga" is an ethnonym describing his presumed place of origin in Africa; he seems puzzled by "written papers" and mentions needing money and drinking cane liquor; and if my interpretation is correct, he seems to end on a note of misery. A crucial observation is that Bozal is always tightly linked to a slave persona, to the extent that even these early scholarly renditions of Bozal cannot help but voice it in a projected "first person" voice of a slave, in this case a slave whose self-descriptions exemplify DuBoisian "double consciousness." I will return to the issue of voicing later, in my

---

[5] The colloquialism *reburujado*, meaning disordered or out of place, was not familiar to Santiagueros I asked, one of whom suggested the gloss *revoliquero*, a colloquialism meaning "life of the party."

[6] The use of variants such as *suamo* and *misuamo* for *mi amo* (my master) are attested in other instances of Bozal, including a folk etymology I was given for *Isuama* in Santiago de Cuba. For much older instances, see Lipski 2005: 79.

[7] According to Cuban folklorist María Isabel Berbes Ribeaux, the nonsense phrase *toro ri toro ri*, sometimes still used in children's stories, conveys the idea of nonsense, as in "who knows what you are writing."

[8] This gloss of *non gurbia* as *agobiado* is tenuous; Berbes Ribeaux suggested that this phrase resembles "Congo" speech in Palo ceremonies.

[9] The last phrase could also be a repetition for emphasis: *aguanta que aguanta*. I thank a reviewer for pointing out this and other alternatives in my gloss.

discussion of spirit possession, since it contributes to the chronotope of Blackness as "the timeless past among us."

If this text and its accompanying characterizations represent elite, literate, White recognition of Bozal as African slaves' distinctive way of speaking, other texts indicate how Bozal was being represented in popular entertainment for middle- and lower-class Whites. Vernacular musical theater, popular literature like comic verse and "*costumbrist*" ("quaint customs") scenarios, and newspapers began to represent Bozal through blackface characters on the stage and in print. This is first evident in the "negrito" performances of Covarrubias in 1812–1815, who is described as blackening his face, but whose texts have not survived. The trend accelerated in the 1830s and 1840s thanks to writer and performer Crespo y Borbón and his African persona as Creto Gangá, and again in the late 1860s, with the *teatro bufo*. Cuban comic theater presenting "negritos" and derived from French, Italian, and Iberian comic theater was well-established long before U.S. blackface performers brought "Jim Crow" and the like on tours to Cuba during the U.S. Civil War (Leal 1975: 21). Today we have access to numerous libretti and song lyrics from these vernacular theater genres, as well as advertisements and accounts of performances in newspapers. In these, we see a personification of Bozal speakers in what becomes a set character type, the negrito, with the diminutive ending on negro reflecting condescending White attitudes toward Blacks.

To briefly illustrate the early theatrical Bozal, consider a sample of an influential characterization by Bartolomé José Crespo y Borbón, who famously inhabited his invented alter ego, Creto Gangá, in live performances and in what were considered hilariously illiterate letters that Creto Gangá penned to Havana newspapers during the 1840s. Crespo y Borbón had already published comic dialogues and collections of poetry featuring the interplay of various "Cuban" voices, including Bozal, often under pen names. But once he created Creto Gangá, this became his best-known persona. Mary Cruz (1974) documents how Creto Gangá's biographical details slowly emerged over numerous publications and newspaper announcements. In the persona of Creto Gangá, Bozal once again voices a projected first-person account by a putative African whose last name is also his ethnonym, although Creto Gangá could represent either a slave or a freedman. Creto Gangá's 1846 poem's title is itself an exemplar of his Bozal (ibid.: 50):

> *Laborintos y trifucas de Canavá*
> *(Los) Laberintos y trifulcas del Carnaval*
> Labyrinths and commotions of Carnival

> *veraero hitoria en veso de lo que pasá en la mácara*
> *verdadero historia en verso de lo que pasó con la máscara*
> true history in verse of what happened in the masquerade

> *a yo Creto Gangá y nengrita mío Frasica lucumí, cuentá po yo memo*
> *a mi, Creto Gangá, y la negrita mía Francisca Lucumí, cuenta para mi (mismo)*
> to myself, Creto Gangá, and my woman Francisca Lucumí, told by myself

Similar kinds of phonological substitutions and elisions, nonstandard verb conjugation, and other syntactic "errors" of agreement and case are evident in this sample as in others. Note, too, that this character's concerns—with frivolous pursuits of Carnival—are in keeping with negative characterizations of slaves. And finally, note the comedy in this presumed dissonance of social indexicality between the attempted pretentious register of this versification and the Bozalisms throughout, perhaps akin to reciting a Shakespearian sonnet in a Cockney accent.[10]

At this moment in Cuba's history as a Spanish colony, Cuba's literati and theater were still oriented toward the genres, fashions, and opinions of the metropole—Europe, after all, was clearly the seat of political as well as cultural authority, despite revolutionary movements in the Americas. Unsurprisingly, then, Bozal enregisterment continued along the lines already laid down in Spanish literature. As the logic went, African-born slaves were denigrated in part for their inability to speak properly, which served as proof that they belonged in their low status. Africans in Cuba who aspired to higher economic and social status were correspondingly ridiculed as rising above their station—that was why Creto Gangá's verses and letters to newspapers inspired hilarity among the predominantly White reading public. Things were poised to change, however, with the emergence of a proto-national Cuban identity that would layer a new, rebellious metacultural frame onto the existing one concerning the social significance of Africans, as I will describe.

Two additional trends emerged. First, Cuban vernacular theater produced a whole set of stock character types, standing for Cuba itself, and no marked racial, internal, or foreign group was left out: peasants ("*guajiros*"), Galicians, Canary Islanders, and even *Yanquis* were parodied. Initially, Cuban peasants and Bozal Blacks were represented with similar voicing devices—grunts, slurred words, and nonstandard phonology and grammar, and they only became differentiated over time. Second, amid this *costumbrist* proliferation of what Cuban theater scholars have called Cuba's homegrown "*comedia dell'arte*" (Leal 1975: p.17), the prototypical negrito character itself, emblemized by Creto Gangá, proliferated into distinct types of Black characters who could be played against one another to heighten the comic effects. Innovations included juxtaposing Bozal-speaking "Congo blacks" to *negros catedráticos*

---

[10] One might also consider connections to various African Diaspora traditions of "fancy talk," which achieved comic effect and "signified" on dominant society using hypercorrect and grandiloquent forms (Abrahams 1983; Lipski 2005: 151–52; Ortiz 1986).

or "educated Blacks," where this term was meant to convey a humorous oxy-moron. The *teatro bufo* also created scenarios depicting stereotyped *mulatas*, Black coach-drivers or *caleseros*, and *negros curros*, in an urban subculture of free Blacks who resisted White authority through fashion, speech, and economic independence. (These were nineteenth-century predecessors of Harlem "zoot suit" street culture in the United States.)[11]

Amid the proliferation, Bozal Blacks continued to be represented as crude-sounding brutes, for comic effect, but increasingly they became honest, earnest, and authentic brutes, even as audiences that had begun to think of themselves as Cubans could identify with such brutish resistance to the polished hand of Spanish imperial power. To illustrate, consider the interplay of stock character types in an example from the later *teatro bufo* of the 1860s introduced in my epigraph: Francisco Fernández's one-act "comedy of Cuban customs," called "Los negros catedráticos," builds its humor by juxtaposing the humble Congo, José, to the pretentious "educated Blacks" Aniceto and Crispín. The latter envision a perfect match between one's daughter and the other's son, and disdain José as a suitor, until it turns out that José, ill-speaking Bozal though he is, makes a lot of money as a stevedore. Compare these self-descriptions by José and Aniceto, which occur within a few lines of each other, early in the play (Fernandez 1868: 10):

José (*negro congo*):

1. *Yo só congo trabajaore la muelle. Yo no toma güariente.*
   Yo soy congo trabajador de los muelles. Yo no tomo aguardiente.
   I am a Congo dockworker. I do not drink cane liquor.
2. *Yo só libre. Yo ganá do peso tuitico lu día.*
   Yo soy libre. Yo gano dos pesos todos los días.
   I am free. I earn two pesos every day.

Aniceto (*negro catedrático*):

1. *Escúchame negro hidrógrafo. ¿Tú sabes el crímen que has cometido con tu atrevida petición?*
   Listen to me hydrographic black. Do you know the crime you have committed with your cheeky petition?
2. *Si no fuera por que soy un hombre instruío y metafísico que reconozco tu inadvertencia*
   If it weren't because I am a well-instructed and metaphysical man who sees your lack of caution
3. *é ignorancia, ya te hubiera elevado a las raíces cúbicas.*
   and ignorance, I would already have elevated you to the cubic roots.

---

[11] See, for example, Noreña's (1881) dialogue between two *negros curros*, or Bachiller y Morales's (1883) argument about the "disfiguration" of Spanish, based on analysis of published caricatures.

In this brief juxtaposition, we can see the emergent differentiation of Afro-Cuban voices, where the malapropisms, register infelicities, and silly locutions of the ridiculous, overreaching "Black professor" are counterposed to the steadfast, authentic, dumbed-down Bozal of the "Congo" laborer, who sounds humble, as befits his low social position—what Americans might call an "aw shucks" persona.

Bakhtin's (1981) exploration of the carnivalesque roots of the novel highlights precisely what we see in Cuban *teatro bufo*, which is a dialogic play of voices that allows for experiments with new social alignments and identifications. Nineteenth-century Cuban theatrical representations of Black speech were double-voiced by White actors and writers interested in representing Bozal and its prototypical speakers in particular ways. As Laurie Frederik (1998) has argued, building on the work of Rine Leal (1975; 1982) and Robin Moore (1997), for vernacular theater the agenda of such actors and writers included reinforcing the social order of slavery and dealing rhetorically with political and social tensions, including those arising from the presence of a large class of free Afro-Cubans in a slave society. Scholars of Cuban vernacular theater agree in characterizing its representations of Black speech as what Jill Lane (2005) calls a "literary register of bozal as discursive blackface" intended as an "inherent parody," and what Leal (1975: 22) describes as an effort to "aurally define" and ridicule the figure of the Bozal Black.

But it is also noteworthy that theatrical Bozal in the 1860s comes to be the register of the more sympathetic Black character, the one who recognizes, as José says in the sequel play, "*¿Tó no só negro?*" ("Aren't we all black?") (Montes Huidobro 1987: 11). Theatrical Bozal thus also came to mark the popularization of a notion of Cubanness, one ventriloquated through blackface characters and thus increasingly establishing Afro-Cuban culture as a basis for Cuban national identity (Frederik 1998). At the same time, pro-imperial and pro-slavery political rhetoric was heightening the sense of racial Otherness and danger that Blacks represented (Ferrer 1999).

Above all, Cuban *teatro bufo*, with its interspersed dialogues, songs, and verses was, as Matías Montes Huidobro says, "meant to be superficial and subversive through a heightened awareness of language" (1987: 48–49, my translation). Indeed, he argues that the Cuban *teatro bufo*, arising at a moment of increasing political tensions and censorship in the 1860s, amid nascent social awareness of the potential for an independent Cuban nation, can be compared to twentieth-century theater of the absurd in its emphasis on façade, word play, and parody.

Given this analysis, it would stretch credulity to assume that "Bozal" as it appears in these theatrical libretti attempted documentary accuracy in representing how enslaved Africans actually spoke, except insofar as it mocked nonstandard colloquialisms and errors common to many foreign learners of Spanish. Indeed, commentators at the time, such as the anti-slavery writers

and activists of the Del Monte group like Félix Tanco, critiqued *costumbrist* depictions of Bozal as exaggerations and caricatures (Williams 1995).[12] Afro-Cuban elites of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries took pains to distance themselves from such false depictions (Lane 2005; Morrison 2000). Lorna Williams (1995) argues that the shifting, often-contested portrayals of White and Black Cubans were tied to changing conceptions of national identity. Language ideologies, and particularly notions about how different social groups spoke Spanish, were certainly intertwined with racial and national imaginaries, creating mutually reinforcing notions about accents and social identifications (Gal and Woolard 2001: 10). I agree with Lane's (2005: 48) assertion that what was enregistered in these nineteenth-century "literary" representations of Bozal in written text and performance was not the actual speech of Africans struggling to learn Spanish but an increasingly entextualized, imagined speech style associated with the caricatured persona of the African slave. What I am contending here is that the Bozal spoken today was heavily influenced by this discursive history of "blackface" Bozal.

Let me now take a moment to summarize the first strands in the interdiscursive web linking Bozal instances into a discourse history of "brutology," to again borrow Aniceto's neologism directed at Bozals. I have traced a genealogy of what, for shorthand, I will call scholarly and theatrical metadiscourses offering representations of Bozal. My intention with these labels is to condense a lot of detail in order to focus on interdiscursive relationships across entire genres and contexts. Clearly, both scholarly and theatrical metadiscourses of Bozal could be expanded into their own interdiscursive webs, constituting those discourses as recognizable and even nameable types (e.g., across events, authors, texts, and performances). Moreover, as I have indicated, when we examine these discourses in greater detail, we find each has its own distinctive and often complicated stance toward the Bozal voices ventriloquated through it, very often juxtaposed to other voices in classic Bakhtinian heteroglossia. Each followed its own circuits, and theatrical Bozal likely found a wider audience than did the catechisms or dictionaries.

Both scholarly and theatrical Bozal presupposed and further enregistered a certain figure of the African slave, the alleged original speaker of Bozal, but in neither case is actual slave speech a necessary "source." The influence of actual slaves' speech on the Bozal figure represented in these metadiscourses is uncertain, and there is reason to doubt that there was much. But in any case, it was overshadowed from the start by other metacultural concerns driving the producers and audiences of scholarly and theatrical Bozal, including an overwhelming marginalization of Africans in the racial order. Notice, too, that because

---

[12] Still, the limited Afro-Cuban literary production encouraged by the Del Monte circle, for example Juan Francisco Manzano's *Life and Poems*, contained uncorrected writing errors (not Bozalisms) because the editors felt that "sloppiness" conveyed greater authenticity (Lane 2005: 49–56).

Bozal as a way of speaking, and the figure of the Bozal to which it was linked, came to have their own metacultural life as objects of discourse, we can see that the specific intentions of various authors and performers are beside the point in tracing uptake and further circulation of Bozal as a type. Lipski's (2005) and others' very careful efforts to delineate which historical sources give more or less authentic representations of Afro-Hispanic speech, based on those sources' apparent intent to parody, denigrate, celebrate, or uplift, do not, and cannot, dispel our doubts about the impact of circulating metacultural models of Bozal on even the most careful ears of the most astute and sympathetic observers of Afro-Cubans. It seems likely that few people in Cuban society were unaware of the social indexicality of Bozal as "the speech of African slaves," given the pervasiveness of even just scholarly and theatrical instantiations of Bozal in nineteenth-century Cuba, not to mention other possible pathways for Bozal's enregisterment: journalistic, literary, musical, religious, and juridical. The intertextual webs enregistering literary and theatrical Bozal are robustly attested.

In the early years of the Cuban Republic, Afro-Cubans struggled for equal rights as full citizens of a nation whose independence many of them had fought for. Even as the heroic figure of the *mambí* fighter, the uneducated rural Black ex-slave who fought the Spanish imperial forces armed only with a machete, took on national political importance, the crude and countrified speech attributed to poor, rural Black creoles had become a new target for Bozal (Lipski 2005: 167–70). This expansion meant that Bozal significantly overlapped with vernacular Cuban Spanish but carried all the negative racial associations it had long since accumulated as the speech of Bozal African slaves, and it became a weapon used against Afro-Cuban political claims. Cuba's founding folklorist Fernando Ortiz himself, in the early twentieth century, elaborated an equivalence between Africanness, witchcraft (understood as superstition), and criminality in a series of influential books and articles delineating Afro-Cuban social types and cultural forms, starting with *Los Negros Brujos* (The black witches) (Ortiz 1973 [1906]). Its parenthetical subtitle was, "Points for a Study of Criminal Ethnology." Afro-Cuban elites of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries took pains to distance themselves from such false depictions and to instead align themselves with nationalist political rhetoric of racial brotherhood and equality, epitomized by José Martí's writings and enacted as a goal of the multiracial insurgency (Ferrer 1999; Lane 2005; Morrison 2000).

In the struggle over the role of Black citizens in the new Cuban nation, twentieth-century scholars took up the nineteenth-century scholarly and theatrical representations of Bozal as if they were transparent records of slave speech. Ortiz wrote about the *negro catedrático* as if this character reflected a real social type rather than a theatrical parody (Lane 2005: 76–77). His study of the infamous nineteenth-century social type, the *negros curros*, a resistant

subculture of free, urban Blacks, relied on characterizations of their speech by nineteenth-century *costumbrist* writers such as novelist Cirilo Villaverde. For example, to illustrate the *curro*'s "affected, insolent, and defiant" speech with its "special jargon" and "peculiar pronunciation" mixing up /l/ and /r/ and substituting /i/, he cited an 1848 poem by José V. Betancourt called "El Negro José del Rosario." As illustrated in the first stanza below, the poem voices the persona of a *negro curro* using eye dialect such as "*nasí*" for "*nací*" (indicating a shift in pronunciation to /s/ instead of Castillian /θ, written as unvoiced "th" in English) and "*Manglai*" for "*Manglar*" (/i/ for /r/), as well as terms from urban jargon (Ortiz 1986: 66–70):

Nasí en Jesú María	I was born in Jesus María
En el famoso Manglai	In the famous Manglar [neighborhood]
Fui perico no hay dudai	I was a *perico* [ruffian] no doubt
Y a ningún cheche temía	And of no *cheche* [tough guy] afraid

Comic and *costumbrist* texts thus became the ethnohistorical evidence of later generations (Lane 2005: 78–79). Scholarly and theatrical representations of Bozal not only survived the end of slavery and birth of the independent Cuban Republic at the turn of the twentieth century, they outlived African-born Cubans themselves. It is the nineteenth-century legacy of scholarly and theatrical representations of Bozal that most directly influenced twentieth-century literary and theatrical genres that together comprised the many facets of the Afrocubanismo movement in the 1920s and 1930s, including novels, poetry, early folklore studies, song lyrics, and *zarzuelas* (light comic operas) (Moore 1997; Williams 1995). Indeed, *zarzuelas*, often in blackface, were enormously popular right up to the 1959 Cuban Revolution (and they have reemerged in nostalgic revivals of the 1990s) (Moore 1997; Thomas 2009). In sum, the enregisterment of Bozal as a metacultural object of attention had taken on a life of its own, with comic theater influencing not only later theater, but also seemingly unrelated genres such as the emerging "criminal ethnology" and "folklore studies."

Ortiz's sister-in-law Lydia Cabrera contributed groundbreaking folklore scholarship from the 1930s through the 1980s, including influential literary representations of Bozal in her short stories and ethnographic studies (see Castellanos 1994; Rodríguez-Mangual 2004). Her work, even more than Ortiz's, has been and continues to be directly taken up by practitioners of Afro-Cuban religion as an ethnographically and religiously authoritative source, constituting an interdiscursive link connecting comic theater typifications and folk religious practices. Her entextualizations of Bozal were ostensibly grounded in how she heard her elderly Afro-Cuban informants speak, most of whom would by then have been at least at one generation's remove from their African-born predecessors. But Cabrera, herself elite and White, would not have been innocent of earlier and cotemporaneous literary and theatrical instantiations of

Bozal any more than Ortiz was. Moreover, caught up as she was in Paris' "primitivist" craze when she lived there during the 1930s, she was certainly aware of the productions of fellow members of the AfroCubanist movement, such as poet Nicolás Guillén and novelist Alejo Carpentier. Cabrera's work attests to her ethnographic sensibilities, but also to her equally excellent literary gifts. It is important to remember, too, that she was initially working without recording technology, and that the youngest of any African-born informants would already have been at least in their seventies by the late 1930s, when she began her ethnographic investigations in earnest. Importation of captive Africans had diminished to a trickle of illegal shipments during the final decades of Cuban slavery, so most of her informants would have been Cuban-born, not "Bozal."[13] It is dubious, then, to assume that the Bozal-inflected voices through which she conveys the wise and funny stories, and herbal and magical lore, are transparent records of actual African-born Cuban speech (see Lipski 2005: 163–68).[14]

Cabrera's Bozal examples demonstrate a similar range of features to those evident in the cases I have already presented, as can be seen in a small excerpt from a story recounted in *El Monte* (1993 [1954]: 183), a book that in turn has been mined by creolists seeking evidence of how her elderly informants spoke. These lines are from a song embedded in a story she attributes to an informant called "R. H.":

Pavo Real, tá bucán palo / pa pará bien, bien, bien / yá pará rriba jagüey
El pavo real está buscando un palo / para pararse bien / ya se paró arriba en el jagüey
The peacock is looking for a branch / to perch well / now it perched high in the liana vine.

Thus far, I have brought the White scholarly and theatrical blackface representations of Bozal into the twentieth century. But what of actual African-born slaves who would have spoken to their children, creating a completely separate circuit for African-inflected Spanish? There are two related metadiscourses of Bozal with sociologically distinct patterns of circulation among Afro-Cuban descendants and cultural heirs of slaves, who also produced (and produce) a fully oral register of Bozal, both as recollections of how elderly African-born

---

[13] As a teenager, Cabrera may already have been attending Afro-Cuban religious ceremonies, but her closest informants, including family servants who gave her entry into those ceremonies, were Cuban-born Blacks steeped in what was already, and perhaps always had been, a profoundly Cuban rather than African folk religious domain (Rodríguez-Mangual 2004: 8–10).

[14] Even as some folk religious practitioners have consulted Cabrera's works, others have critiqued her claims to accuracy and authenticity on the grounds that an outsider could never penetrate closely held religious secrets and that *El Monte* in particular demonstrates confusion in mixing distinct jargons and traditions. An important example is the introduction to a published Santería manual, dated 1955 and signed by a Dr. Roque de la Nuez, who expressly disparages *El Monte* (Angarica 1955: 3–4). I thank Stephan Palmié for this observation and the suggestion that the impassioned Dr., who also identifies himself by his initiated name in Santería, Efún Yomí, might have been inadvertently inhabiting an updated *negro catedrático* persona (see Ocasio 2012).

relatives spoke in the early decades of the twentieth century (Ortiz López 1998), and a register of religious performance. When in trance, many folk religious practitioners, of all racial backgrounds, are possessed by spirits of deceased Africans and African deities like the *orichas* of Santería, who are often characterized as speaking in Bozal. Bozal thus continues to demand a first-person voicing in which the speaker performs the persona of an African speaking Spanish, whether as deity, free person, slave, or religious authority.

This indexical connection is so powerful that when, during a sociolinguistic interview, the linguist Luis Ortiz López asked a young Cuban man to demonstrate Bozal speech, the man first "imitated a black woman during a spiritual session," then actually fell into trance, possessed by a *muerto* (Ortiz López 1998; see Wirtz 2007a). I repeat here part of the sample transcribed by Ortiz López, with my standardized gloss and translation below each line:

1. *Niño, tú tá queré que lo negro áa decí cuanto yo vá hacé, si me tá acodá*
   Niño, tú quieres que el negro diga en cuanto yo voy a hacer, si estoy de acuerdo
   Kid, you want the Black man to speak as much as I will if I am willing
2. *Cuando yo tá vení de lo tierra mío sí poqque yo tá sé negro de nación*
   Cuando yo vine desde mi tierra es porque yo soy negro de nación
   When I came from my land it is because I am African-born

The spirit describes himself as a *negro de nación*, a more polite colonial-era label than "*negro bozal*" for someone born in Africa. In his speech we see features characteristic of theatrical and scholarly Bozal, including the presence of proto-creole verbal aspect markers similar to those that Germán de Granda identified in Cabrera's transcriptions of her elderly Black informants. Indeed, Cabrera's work has been tremendously influential among folk religious practitioners, and her book *El Monte* has become something of a religious source-text, alongside the religious notebooks Santería practitioners' have a tradition of keeping, some of which have been published as manuals (Dianteill and Swearingen 2003; Duany 1988; Rodríguez-Mangual 2004). Cabrera's writings have become a source of Bozal, as well as other specialized religious language and knowledge, treated by some as a transparent record of orally transmitted knowledge passed from Bozal slaves to their genealogical and cultural heirs. This is but one case illustrating my more general point that some later-appearing discourses in the interdiscursive web now mediate the metacultural interpretation of earlier discourses, such that contemporary representations of Bozal are interdiscursive with multiple antecedents.

Interdiscursive relationships can exist between coeval metadiscourses as well, even when those discourses follow quite different sociological circuits, because even actors in separate social positions are nonetheless aware of each other and of more socially distant discourses, if only in a vague and general way. It seems likely that Lydia Cabrera was influenced by both literary "blackface" Bozal and elderly Afro-Cubans and folk religious practitioners, although she explicitly type-sourced only the latter. Likewise, Afro-Cuban

descendants of slaves would have been aware of, and even performed in, consumed, or critiqued some of the ubiquitous "blackface" Bozal that was saturating popular theater, music, and literature.

In religious contexts, Bozalisms and biographical details of an African or slave persona usually co-occur with markers of one or another register of folk religious practice, be it Lucumí used in Santería, or the "Congo" jargon of the Reglas de Palo. The entire combination is often referred to as "*lengua*" ("tongue"), shorthand for "African tongue" (Wirtz 2007b). Among religious participants, virtuosic displays of ritual jargon from those working with or possessed by African deities or *muertos* index religious authority, expertise, and community belonging, while Bozal speech authenticates the presence of deities and spirits. With the exception of Cabrera's studies, these collocations of Bozal and ritual registers are not present in earlier literary-theatrical instantiations of Bozal. Even those who are not religious experts can appreciate the esoteric and foreign African "flavor" of such speech, reminiscent as it is of the invented "Africanisms" of Sor Juana and Nicolás Guillén alike. To give a very brief example, consider the utterance below from a Santería ceremony in 2000, in which an elderly female priest was possessed by the *oricha* Obatalá and spoke to a small group I was in (the parentheses indicate a response from another participant).

> El suyo va el suyo (An-jan) / e cuando etá ete bien / emi no está ara o
> You and you (Uh-huhn) / and when this is well / I is not [in this] land/body [emphatic]

The *oricha* refers to two of us by pointing and using what appears to be a neologism invented on the spot, "*el suyo va el suyo*" (literally the denotationally confusing "yours goes yours") that my Cuban transcribers described as a Bozalism. The *oricha* continues with nonstandard verb uses, including a present tense, third-person conjugated "*está*" in place of the first-person conjugation and future marking that would be more standard in colloquial Cuban Spanish. She also uses two words from Santería's ritual jargon, Lucumí, *emí* (I) and *ara* (land, body), inflecting the latter with a Lucumí emphatic particle (-*o*). The overall effect of this utterance, especially in the full interactional context, was of a Bozal African voice struggling to express itself in unfamiliar Spanish, and of indirectness and hidden layers of meaning within a humble and earthy way of speaking.

This and other transcriptions of contemporary ritual performances of spirits and saints I have made, in this way, show the same range of phonological and syntactic features being used to mark Bozalisms, albeit alongside additional discursive features and within an interactional context very different from most of the literary and theatrical examples I have discussed (e.g., Wirtz 2011; and see below). Today, many such religious and folklore performances draw upon and metaculturally refract earlier "literary" and other contemporary oral instantiations of Bozal.

Analyzing a corpus of ritual speech recorded during Regla de Palo Monte ceremonies in western Cuba, Armin Schwegler (2006) catalogues Bozal features that appeared, including:

- morphological reductions (e.g., *yo te llama*, "I call you");
- phonetic alterations (*riba* instead of *[a]rriba*, "on top");
- grammatical simplifications (e.g., elimination of articles);
- grammatical overextensions (e.g., use of genderless article *lo* instead of *el* or *la*);
- reduplications (e.g., *tiempo tiempo*, "a long time ago");
- omissions of syntactic complementizers (e.g., *tiempo tiempo ___ [que] te llama*);
- deletion of prepositional "of" (e.g., *cuarto ___ [del] fundamento*);
- uninflected *ta* + INFINITIVE;
- archaic Spanish-derived vocabulary (e.g., *ague*, "today")

The parenthetic examples are Schwegler's, but examples of all of these features have appeared in this article's examples as well. Balga Rodríguez (2000–2003) mentions many of the same features but characterizes them as, for the most part, typical of the mistakes any non-fluent speaker of Spanish might make. We must therefore return to the question of how to define Bozal: there may be characteristic markedly nonstandard linguistic features to expect in a Bozal sample, such as those listed above, but this still begs the question of what exactly makes a segment of speech or text "Bozal," rather than some other kind of nonstandard or disfluent speech? I do not think we can rely on a decontextualized set of diagnostic features, because what really identifies a text segment as "in Bozal" is that it draws on a repertoire of "nonstandard" linguistic resources to voice a prototypical Bozal speaker: a Bozal African. The circularity should by now be apparent: Bozal is what Bozals spoke, and it reflects their unfamiliarity with Spanish. This circularity should not be surprising in light of the conditions of Bozal's enregisterment as a mocking or parodic form, but it is too seldom acknowledged by those who study Bozal.

Alongside religious and folklore representations of Bozal, there has emerged a new generation of scholarly metadiscourses about Bozal. Linguists studying marginalized Spanish dialects and seeking evidence of possible Spanish creolization (McWhorter 2000) bring together examples culled from *all* of the earlier and contemporary representations of Bozal as a single, unitary register that they characterize as the speech of African slaves. Granda (1994) describes two approaches to collecting exemplars of Bozal, one focused on written historical sources, and the other directed toward oral traditions. He and other creolists have, of course, pointed out the caricatures evident in some literary sources, even as they start with the telling assumption that all represented speech of colonial-era Africans belongs to the category of Bozal (Castellanos 1990; Granda 1988; Lipski 2005). That is, they make a secondary distinction by setting off sources deemed authentic or spurious because contaminated by stereotypes, but they still retain Bozal as a totalizing category.

Overall, by virtue of finding historical linguistic value in Bozal exemplars, creolists have initiated a whole new, positive metacultural reappraisal of previous Bozal discourses. But in doing so, they also do the metacultural work of arranging neat, linear discourse chains that point back to *actual* slave speech as the original "baptismal event" creating Bozal.

We should be wary of assuming that the enregisterment of Bozal as it has come down to us tells us much at all about how African-born slaves once spoke Spanish, and whether their speech could even be collectively characterized as a unitary register (except retroactively). Instead, my analysis here speaks volumes about how they were viewed, and how these simultaneously over-determined and condensed representations of Blackness, and particularly of Africanness, have served a variety of ideological ends over the decades and centuries. It shows how claims to represent Black speech authentically (usually staked on having heard actual slave or ex-slave speech) have, at some nodes of the interdiscursive web, authorized those ideological ends. There are reasons for caution: Balga Rodríguez's (2000–2003) linguistic study of *costumbrist* and *bufo* Bozal samples concludes that there is much variation, very little evidence of creolizing features, and a great deal of evidence that authors were deliberately creating comedic and derogatory effects.

Twentieth-century examples of Bozal include textual and oral metadiscourses and representations. We can note the consistency in how the register is characterized, even as elite scholarly metadiscourses have shifted their stance from early denigration of Black speech to today's "neutral" linguistic account of the degree of phonological and morphosyntactic deviation from unmarked colloquial Cuban speech. But what comes out of this web of distinct nodes of metalinguistic activity is a clear sense of a unitary register under the label "Bozal." I have roughed out an enormously detailed story in tracing links between nineteenth-century literary "blackface" caricatures, twentieth-century folklore studies, and present-day uses of Bozal in popular religious ceremonies and linguistic analysis, in order to focus here on the broadest interdiscursive connections across these genres. That is because it is at this macro-level, I have argued, that Bozal is enregistered, enabling it to transcend the ebb and flow of popularity, and thus replication, of discourses instantiating it. For example, the relative decline of blackface vernacular entertainment has not prevented exaggerated visual and aural cues of blackface racial mockery from reappearing as authenticating signs of historical African presence in folklore and religious ritual performances.

The genealogy I have traced shows that both uptake and metacultural reevaluation are central to enregisterment, such that a robust and durable African slave persona is created and tightly linked to a recognizably "disfigured" way of speaking that unites all of the disparate discourses in the web I have described as instances of a unitary type called "Bozal." This genealogy is an elaboration of what Judith Irvine describes as "triadic interdiscursivity,"

where "discourse A is linked to discourse B, but also each of these is linked to (say) person P" (2005: 78). For the case of Bozal, the figure of the African-born slave, rather than any specific set of linguistic features, can be envisioned as the central axis around which enregisterment of Bozal has occurred, as it is always implicated in Bozal voicings.

CONCLUSION

Clearly, Bozal is a robust metalinguistic category enregistered to index a distinctive "voice." It has existed as a metalinguistic category in Cuba for well over two centuries, largely on the strength of its ability to ventriloquate the social persona of African-born slaves, and its metacultural value as distinctively "wrong, bad, and ugly" Spanish—consisting of utterances not conforming to unmarked, everyday Cuban speech. And here's the rub: it appears to be a linguistic invention of White people, one perhaps as constitutive of their Whiteness as of the Blackness of African-born "Bozals."

Americanists will recognize parallels with recent scholarship on U.S. blackface minstrelsy. An example is Lott's (1993) argument that such nineteenth-century entertainments of the working classes imitated what they imagined to be Black aesthetic forms to help construct their Whiteness and class status through a dialectic of intimacy, desire, and distancing, thereby constituting "a peculiarly American structure of racial feeling." Or consider examples traced by Lhamon (1998), even as he contests Lott's assertion that White performers would have known little of Black folkways by depicting the late-eighteenth through mid-nineteenth-century northeastern United States, in places like New York City and along the Erie Canal, as sites of considerable cultural intimacy, miscegenation, and "cross-racial affiliation" (see ibid.: 17–19, 151). And yet Lhamon details the paths of cultural transmission in which enslaved Black performer Bobolink Bob Rowley's 1820s imitations of bird whistles were borrowed into Thomas Rice's "Jim Crow" performances. That "strange whistle" was by the 1840s understood to imitate train whistles not birds, and it became a staple trope of blackface (elided with Black?) authenticity, until again appearing in Al Jolson's twentieth-century performances (Lhamon 1998: 90–102). That a Black slave's performance anchors this particular interdiscursive history does not change the enregisterment of the whistle (together with any number of additional gestures, songs, steps, and voicings) through multiple reticulations imitating and adapting not just authentic "Black folk" but more than a few influential performers of all racial backgrounds. A "verificationist" agenda, which disregards the complexities of Black performance in light of blackface minstrelsy in order to directly link Bobolink Bob to Al Jolson (for example), seems rather to miss the point (see Scott 1991). As in the case of Cuban Bozal as form of speech and figure of the Cuban national imagination, blackface theatrical representations generated their own trajectories of invention and imitation.

The question guiding my analysis of the interdiscursive genealogy of Bozal has been to ask: What are current representations of Bozal speech, especially those in folk religious ceremonies, interdiscursive with? My answer has contradicted the usual metadiscursive characterization of Bozal as directly type-sourcing once-upon-a-time slave speech via a linear speech chain. I have instead proposed that we understand contemporary performances of Bozal as deriving from a tradition of "discursive blackface" as much as, or rather than, from a tradition of Black speech. In this case, contemporary religious performances of Bozal, and some folklore performances, would constitute a re-appropriation from discursive blackface, rather than continuity with an African and slave past, on the part of Cubans identifying, however partially, with Blackness and/or with cultural practices marked as Afro-Cuban.

A parting thought, to return to the other issue with which I began: does it matter whether these interdiscursive links are reflexively recognized in some way, or can interdiscursivity mean something purely as an analytical discovery by the observer? For a closer-to-home example, if filmmaker Spike Lee points out an interdiscursive connection between American blackface minstrelsy and contemporary hip hop artists, as he does in the final scenes of the film *Bamboozled*, is an actual, demonstrable, and preexisting historical connection required, or is it enough that *Bamboozled* has made the connection, especially in light of 1990s-era anxieties about hip hop's corrupting and disrupting potential? And, to pose the inverse question, if there are demonstrable or at least likely historical connections, what if the contemporary artists nonetheless reject them? Cuban religious practitioners readily describe the speech of African *muertos* and deities as Bozal, but they explain similarities to blackface Bozal as a result of a common origin in actual slave speech, not in a more direct influence of theatrical stereotypes on spirit possession speech. Given that racializing discourses are so often propagated through a refusal to recognize them as such, the stakes of my question are high. I am not sure what recognizing an interdiscursive history of blackface would mean for Cuban religious invocations of Bozal—maybe a lot; maybe nothing. What greater reflexivity about our participation in enregisterment processes means for linguistic attempts to "reconstruct" Afro-Hispanic speech through Bozal is, I hope, clear from my argument. So, to conclude not with a declarative but with a question: how do all of us who are entangled in a particular racializing web evaluate potential interdiscursive links in creating discourse histories, and to what ends?

REFERENCES

Abrahams, Roger. 1983. *The Man-Of-Words in the West Indies: Performance and the Emergence of Creole Culture*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press.
Agha, Asif. 2003. The Social Life of Cultural Value. *Language and Communication* 23: 231–73.

Agha, Asif. 2006. *Language and Social Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Alonso, Martín. 1958. *Enciclopedia del Idioma*. Vol. 1. Madrid: Aguilar.

Andrews, George Reid. 2007. Recordando Africa al Inventar Uruguay: Sociedades de Negros en el Carnaval de Montevideo, 1865–1930. *Revista de Estudios Sociales* 26 (Apr.): 127–28.

Angarica, Nicolas Valentin. 1955. *Manual de Orihate: Religion Lucumi*. Cuba: n.p.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. 1992. *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bachiller y Morales, Antonio. 1883. Desfiguración a Que Está Expuesto el Idioma Castellano al Contacto y Mezcla de las Razas. *Revista de Cuba* 14: 97–104.

Bailey, Benjamin. 2001. The Language of Multiple Identities Among Dominican Americans. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 10, 2:190–223.

Bakhtin, Mikhail M. 1981. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Balga Rodríguez, Yohanis. 2000–2003. El Habla Bozal y Su Representación en una Muestra de la Literatura Costumbrista Cubana. Un Acercamiento a la Problemática del Supuesto Criollo Cubano. *Anuario L/L: Estudios Lingüísticos* (La Habana) 15–18: 17–24.

Bauman, Richard. 1998. *Mediational Performance, Traditionalization, and the Authorization of Discourse*. Paper presented at the Ethnohistory Workshop, University of Pennsylvania.

Bergad, Laird. 2007. *The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bergad, Laird W., Fe Iglesias García, and María del Carmen Barcia. 1995. *The Cuban Slave Market 1790–1880*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boas, Franz. 1974 [1889]. On Alternating Sounds. In G. Stocking, ed., *The Shaping of American Anthropology, 1883–1911: A Franz Boas Reader*. New York: Basic Books, 72–77.

Bucholtz, Mary. 2009. Styles and Stereotypes: Laotian American Girls' Linguistic Negotiation of Identity. In A. Reyes and A. Lo, eds., *Beyond Yellow English: Toward a Linguistic Anthropology of Asian Pacific America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 21–42.

Cabrera, Lydia. 1993. *El Monte*. Havana: Editorial Letras Cubanas.

Cameron, Deborah. 1995. *Verbal Hygiene*. London: Routledge.

Castellanos, Isabel. 1990. Grammatical Structure, Historical Development, and Religious Usage of Afro-Cuban Bozal Speech. *Folklore Forum* 23, 1/2: 57–84.

Castellanos, Isabel. 1994. Introducción. In I. Castellanos, ed., *Lydia Cabrera: Páginas Sueltas*. Miami: Ediciones Universal, 11–66.

Chude-Sokei, Louis. 2006. *The Last "Darky": Bert Williams, Black-on-Black Minstrelsy, and the African Diaspora*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Chun, Elaine W. 2009. Ideologies of Legitimate Mockery. In A. Reyes and A. Lo, eds., *Beyond Yellow English: Toward a Linguistic Anthropology of Asian Pacific America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 261–87.

Coupland, Nikolas. 2007. *Style: Language Variation and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Covarrubios Orozco, Sebastián de. 2006 [1611]. *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana o Española*. Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra.

Cruz, Mary. 1974. *Creto Gangá*. La Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro.

Curtin, Philip D. 1969. *The Slave Trade: A Census*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Cutler, Cecilia. 2003. 'Keepin' It Real': White Hip-Hoppers' Discourses of Language, Race, and Authenticity. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 13, 2: 211–33.

Dianteill, Erwan and Martha Swearingen. 2003. From Hierography to Ethnography and Back: Lydia Cabrera's Texts and the Written Tradition in Afro-Cuban Religions. *Journal of American Folklore* 116, 2: 273–92.

Dick, Hilary and Kristina Wirtz. 2011. Introduction: Racializing Discourses. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 21, 1s: E2–E10.

Duany, Jorge. 1988. After the Revolution: The Search for Roots in Afro-Cuban Culture. *Latin American Research Review* 23, 1: 244–55.

Du Bois, John W. 1992. Meaning Without Intention: Lessons from Divination. In J. H. Hill and J. T. Irvine, eds., *Responsibility and Evidence in Oral Discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 48–71.

Fernandez, Francisco. 1868. *Los Negros Catedráticos: Absurdo Cómico en un Acto de Costumbres Cubanas en Prosa y Verso*. Havana: Comercio Obispo.

Ferrer, Ada. 1999. *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868–1898*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Frederik, Laurie Aleen. 1998. The Contestation of Cuba's Public Sphere in National Theater and the Transformation from Teatro Bufo to Teatro Nuevo, or What Happens when el Negrito, el Gallego, and la Mulata meet el Hombre Nuevo. Chicago: University of Chicago Hewlett Foundation Working Papers Series, No. 1.

Gal, Susan and Kathryn A. Woolard. 2001. Constructing Languages and Publics: Authority and Representation. In S. Gal and K. A. Woolard, eds *Languages and Publics: The Making of Authority*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 1–12.

Gaudio, Rudolph P. 2011. The Blackness of "Broken English." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 21, 2: 230–46.

Granda, Germán de. 1988. *Lingüística e Historia: Temas Afro-Hispánicos*. Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, Secretariado de Publicaciones.

Granda, Germán de. 1994. *Español de América, Español de Africa, y Hablas Criollas Hispánicas: Cambios, Contactos y Contextos*. Madrid: Editorial Gredos.

Guillén, Nicolás. 1972. *Obra Poética*. 2 vols. La Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro.

Gumperz, John J. 1992. Contextualization and Understanding. In A. Duranti and C. Goodwin, eds., *Rethinking Context: Language as an Interactive Phenomenon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 229–52.

Hartikainen, Elina. 2008. African Accents, Speaking Child Spirits and the Brazilian Popular Imaginary: Permutations of Africanness in Candomblé. In S. Palmié, ed., *Africas of the Americas: Beyond the Search for Origins in the Study of Afro-Atlantic Religions*. Leiden: Brill, 323–50.

Hill, Jane H. 1993. Hasta la Vista Baby: Anglo Spanish in the American Southwest. *Critique of Anthropology* 13, 2: 145–76.

Hill, Jane H. 2001. Mock Spanish, Covert Racism and the (Leaky) Boundary Between Public and Private Spheres. In S. Gal and K. A. Woolard, eds., *Languages and Publics: The Making of Authority*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 83–102.

Hill, Jane H. 2005. Intertextuality as Source and Evidence for Indirect Indexical Meanings. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 15, 1: 113–24.

Hill, Jane H. 2008. *The Everyday Language of White Racism*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Irvine, Judith. 1982. The Creation of Identity in Spirit Mediumship and Possession. In D. Parkin, ed., *Semantic Anthropology*. London: Academic Press, 241–60.

Irvine, Judith. 2005. Commentary: Tears and Knots in the Interdiscursive Fabric. In "Discourse Across Speech Events: Intertextuality and Interdiscursivity in Social Life," *special issue of Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 15, 1: 72–80.

Irvine, Judith. 2008. Subjected Words: African Linguistics and the Colonial Encounter. *Language & Communication* 28: 323–43.

Irvine, Judith and Susan Gal. 2000. Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation. In P. Kroskrity, ed., *Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Politics, Identities*. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 35–83.

Keane, Webb. 1997. Religious Language. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 26: 47–71.

Kiple, Kenneth F. 1976. *Blacks in Colonial Cuba 1774–1899*. Gainesville: University Presses of Florida.

Lane, Jill. 2005. *Blackface Cuba, 1840–1895*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Laviña, Javier, ed. 1989. *Doctrina Para Negros*. Barcelona: Sendai Ediciones.

Leal, Rine. 1975. *Teatro Bufo Siglo XIX. 2 vols*. Vol. 1. La Habana: Editorial Arte y Literatura.

Leal, Rine. 1982. *La Selva Oscura: De los Bufos a la Neocolonia (Historia del Teatro Cubano de 1868 a 1902)*. La Habana: Editorial Arte y Literatura.

Lhamon, W. T. 1998. *Raising Cain: Blackface Performance from Jim Crow to Hip Hop*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Lipski, John M. 2005. *A History of Afro-Hispanic Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lott, Eric. 1993. *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Mahar, William J. 1999. *Behind the Burnt Cork Mask: Early Blackface Minstrelsy and Antebellum American Popular Culture*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

McWhorter, John H. 2000. *The Missing Spanish Creoles: Recovering the Birth of Plantation Contact Languages*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Meek, Barbra A. 2006. And the Injun Goes "How!": Representations of American Indian English in White Public Space. *Language in Society* 35, 1: 93–128.

Montes Huidobro, Matías. 1987. *Teoría y Práctica del Catedratismo en Los Negros Catedráticos de Francisco Fernández*. La Habana: Editorial Persona.

Moore, Robin. 1997. *Nationalizing Blackness: Afrocubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920–1940*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Morrison, Karen Y. 2000. Civilization and Citizenship Through the Eyes of Afro-Cuban Intellectuals During the First Constitutional Era, 1902–1940. *Cuban Studies* 30: 76–99.

Mudimbe, V. Y. 1988. *The Invention of Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Mudimbe, V. Y. 1994. *The Idea of Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Murray, David R. 1971. Statistics of the Slave Trade to Cuba, 1790–1867. *Journal of Latin American Studies* 3, 2: 131–49.

Nathan, Hans. 1962. *Dan Emmett and the Rise of Early Negro Minstrelsy*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Noreña, Carlos. 1881. Los Negros Curros. In A. Bachiller y Morales, ed., *Tipos y Costumbres de la Isla de Cuba*. La Habana: Miguel de Villa.

Ocasio, Rafael. 2012. *Afro-Cuban Costumbrismo: From Plantation to the Slums*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Ochs, Elinor. 1992. Indexing Gender. In A. Duranti and C. Goodwin, eds., *Rethinking Context: Language as an Interactive Phenomenon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 335–58.

Ortiz, Fernando. 1973 [1906]. *Los Negros Brujos*. Miami: Ediciones Universal.

Ortiz, Fernando. 1986. *Los Negros Curros*. La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales.

Ortiz López, Luis A. 1998. *Huellas Etnosociolingüísticas Bozales y Afrocubanas*. Frankfurt and Madrid: Vervuet Verlag.

Rampton, Ben. 1995. *Crossing: Language and Ethnicity among Adolescents*. London: Longman.

Remedi, Gustavo. 2004. *Carnival Theater: Uruguay's Popular Performers and National Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Rodríguez-Mangual, Edna M. 2004. *Lydia Cabrera and the Construction of an Afro-Cuban Cultural Identity*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Ronkin, Maggie and Helen E. Karn. 1999. Mock Ebonics: Linguistic Racism in Parodies of Ebonics on the Internet. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 3, 3: 360–80.

Roth-Gordon, Jennifer. 2011. Discipline and Disorder in the Whiteness of Mock Spanish. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 21, 2: 211–29.

Routon, Kenneth. 2008. Conjuring the Past: Slavery and the Historical Imagination in Cuba. *American Ethnologist* 35, 4: 632–49.

Samuels, David. 2004. Language, Meaning, Modernity, and Doowop. *Semiotica* 149: 297–323.

Saussure, Ferdinand. 1996 [1916]. *Course in General Linguistics*. R. Harris, trans. Chicago: Open Court.

Schwegler, Armin. 2006. Bozal Spanish: Captivating New Evidence from a Contemporary Source (Afro-Cuban "Palo Monte"). In J. Fuller and L. L. Thornburg, eds., *Studies in Contact Linguistics: Essays in Honor of Glenn G. Gilbert*. New York: Peter Lang, 71–100.

Scott, David. 1991. That Event, This Memory: Notes on the Anthropology of African Diasporas in the New World. *Diaspora* 1, 3: 261–83.

Silverstein, Michael. 1981. *The Limits of Awareness*. Austin: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

Silverstein, Michael. 1993. Metapragmatic Discourse and Metapragmatic Function. In J. A. Lucy, ed., *Reflexive Language: Reported Speech and Metapragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 33–58.

Silverstein, Michael. 2001. The Limits of Awareness. In A. Duranti, ed., *Linguistic Anthropology: A Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell, 382–401.

Silverstein, Michael. 2003. Indexical Order and the Dialectics of Sociolinguistic Life. *Language and Communication* 23, 3–4: 193–229.

Stevenson, Robert. 1994. Ethnological Impulses in the Baroque Villancico. *Inter-American Music Review* 14, 1: 67–106.

Testa, Silvina. 2004. *Como una Memoria Que Dura: Cabildos, Sociedades y Religiones Afrocubanas de Sagua La Grande*. La Habana: Centro Cultural Pablo de la Torriente Brau.

Thomas, Susan. 2009. *Cuban Zarzuela: Performing Race and Gender on Havana's Lyric Stage*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Urban, Greg. 2001. *Metaculture: How Culture Moves Through the World*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Williams, Lorna. 1995. The Emergence of an Afro-Cuban Aesthetic. *Afro-Hispanic Review* (Spring): 48–57.

Wirtz, Kristina. 2007a. Enregistered Memory and Afro-Cuban Historicity in Santería's Ritual Speech. *Language and Communication* 27: 245–57.

Wirtz, Kristina. 2007b. *Ritual, Discourse, and Community in Cuban Santería: Speaking a Sacred World*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Wirtz, Kristina. 2011. Cuban Performances of Blackness as the Timeless Past Still among Us. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 21, 1S: E11–E34.

Abstract: In tracing a discourse history for the emergence and enregisterment of Bozal, a Cuban speech style that robustly indexes the historical persona of the African slave, this paper proposes that such discourse "genealogies" are more accurately reconstructed not through a linear, teleological metaphor of "speech chains" but through a more reticulated, multiply stranded web of interdiscursive connections. Bozal, in contemporary Cuba, characterizes the voices of African deities and spirits of the dead who possess their devotees to speak during folk religious ceremonies. I consider a deeper history of theatrical "blackface" influences on religious performances of spirit possession, a discourse history that destabilizes facile notions of "authentic, African" cultural sources in Cuba. I argue that rather than reflecting direct memories of *actual* speech by African-born slaves, once upon a time, Bozal's enregisterment began with, and always involved, double-voiced representations of imagined social types—what recent scholarship has described as "mock" forms disparaging the speech of racialized Others. The "Bozal slave" was a figure caricatured for comedic effect, proliferating into a whole set of stock theatrical characters, some of which became focal points for building nationalist sentiment in mid-nineteenth-century Cuba. The lesson for understanding the role of Bozal or any "Africanizing" voice in performance today is clear: we must always consider the mediating effects of metacultural practices in shaping our understanding of the social meaning of speech styles.