Linguistic racism and speaker positionality in Germany's schools

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Many school students in Germany are plurilingual and use German and further languages in their daily lives. This use is differently approached and valued. Not only languages spoken, but race, too, plays a role in how language use is addressed in schools: (non-)racialized speaker positionalities are of relevance in how language use is (not) normalized, supported, or acknowledged. For example, students are differently positioned along German proficiency in relation to their racial positioning, with many Black students and Students of Color experiencing linguistic Othering in being positioned as not speaking German well (enough). An important question arises: How do students re-position themselves along such ascriptions? In the seminar, I will discuss my findings with focus on re-produced speaker positionalities along the binary of raciolinguistic Others and the raciolinguistic norm. The results highlight the necessity of focusing in more detail on how listening positionalities shape language use in society and in schools specifically.

Biodata

Dr. Liesa Rühlmann is a postdoc research fellow in the research project 'Knowledge about Racism' (WueRD) and coordinator of the 'Knowledge Network Racism Research' (WinRa-West) in the department of Education at Bielefeld University in Germany. Her PhD thesis titled [Race, Language, and Subjectivation. A Raciolinguistic Perspective on Schooling Experiences in Germany](#) was published in October and won the Karl H. Ditze Prize 2023, an annual award honoring the best postgraduate thesis in the humanities at the University of Hamburg.