

## Bridging old and new terrains: urban Mapuche sovereignty practices on Facebook

Hyejin Nah (Anthropology, UC Riverside)



This presentation examines how urban Mapuche, who have struggled to innovate their local sense of sovereignty in the face of social changes and an oppressive modern state agenda, explore the idiosyncratic linguistic and communicative properties of social media, especially Facebook, for their sovereignty practices. Mapuche have long been hyper-alert to the seemingly neutral yet highly political and social ideological implications of existing communicative practices. Unlike many other communicative practices (i.e. literacy) that entered Mapuche communities already charged with modern Western hegemony, Facebook has emerged as a yet relatively un-conventionalized, and unsettled combination of communicative terrains.

This presentation scrutinizes how Mapuche react to and take advantage of Facebook's novelty to practice longstanding Mapuche ideologies of sovereignty. How do Mapuche navigate newly emerging linguistic resources to make space in which to emplace their old nation? How do these new communicative ecologies trigger a longstanding Mapuche sense of sovereignty? How does the new linguistic topography of Facebook itself become territory over which Mapuche can feel sovereign, while also contributing to Mapuche sense of sovereignty over their traditional land? I attempt to answer these questions by examining my data on Mapuche intertwined online and offline linguistic practices, building on my fieldwork with Mapuche in Santiago, Chile. What emerges is Mapuche use of Facebook at the blurred boundaries of literacy and orality; synchronous and asynchronous timing; online and offline networks; individual and collective authorship; and public and private spheres.

### Bio

Hyejin Nah is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology in the department of Anthropology at UC Riverside. Professor Nah is a linguistic anthropologist broadly interested in language ideologies and practices, language and/in media, indigeneity, sovereignty, social media and Latin America. Currently, building on her long-term fieldwork in Santiago, Chile, she is working on a book that examines urban Mapuche communicative and expressive repertoires across face-to-face and online interactions, exploring language's unexpected roles in local pursuits of nationhood and sovereignty. She received her Ph.D. in Anthropology from New York University in 2015.