I   Introduction

Popular saying

I.1   On Hope

This book aims to illustrate what language can teach us about the practice, logic, and feasibility of hope into the twenty-first century. The possibility of language as a form of producing hope is especially imperative if we accept the premise that we live, in the words of David Theo Goldberg (2021), in a "world of dread" (p. 1). There is indeed much to dread and to feel hopeless about in the world: climate change, environmental destruction, water scarcity, food insecurity, human trafficking, indigenous dispossession, reactionary populism, systemic racism, religious persecution, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, warfare, militarization, the vagaries of COVID-19, and severe economic inequalities and inequities, to name but a few global issues. Much of the dread that we have experienced is rooted in the social and economic stratification engendered and exacerbated by capitalism, in particular "the conflict between the needs of people and the requirements of profit" (Wood, 2002, p. 1). The idea of maximizing profits by exploiting human labor and natural resources has been historically entrenched in the very logics of capitalism, especially as it grew through colonialism, slavery, and extractivism via institutions of empire and the nation-state. Despair and dread are certainly some of the prominent sentiments felt by the peoples of Africa who were enslaved between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries and forced into inhumane labor in the Americas. The same feelings must have affected indigenous peoples everywhere across continents, for instance in Oceania and Asia, as they were dominated, displaced, and often exterminated. What "feelings" of unease might we attribute to animals and plants in conquered lands, especially as their habitat gave way to models of expansion such as the sugar plantation and other forms of infrastructure establishment and their attendant decimation of biodiversity? What does it

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[1] "Hope is the last to die."

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mean that affects of dread, despair, and hopelessness are disproportionately foisted upon beings who are declared "bare life" (Agamben, 1998) or "precarious life" (Butler, 2006) subjects, rendered ultimately as dispensable and disposable by contemporary regimes of violence?

Today, such effects of dread, despair, and hopelessness – proper to the scalable paradigm of modernist expansion described by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (2015) – are also distinctively embedded in the contemporary mutations of capitalism and its dispersion into the most intimate and formerly private spaces of our lives. For Goldberg, one of the root causes of dread is tracking-capitalism, which "mobilizes and applies algorithmically driven technology to track the movements, virtual and physical, of almost everyone and everything, nearly everywhere" (p. 79). Tracking-capitalism is distinct from yet another novel mutation of capitalism, namely surveillance capitalism (Zuboff, 2019). According to Goldberg (2021), "Surveillance proceeds by monitoring the content people are communicating. Tracking, by extension, plots movements and networks" (p. 80). Tracking-capitalism cares less about intent of behavior than it does patterns of behavior. As such, it could be said that what makes tracking-capitalism particularly dreadful are the inevitable degrees of separation between the individual and the tracking agent. It is difficult to hope for a corrective (e.g., "data privacy") when we don't know what we are hoping for in the first place. For instance, is it a matter of privacy if the data are being utilized in the aggregate, tracing patterns of people not individually but instead collectively? Is tracking-capitalism a matter of exploitation and the commodification of human labor and life, or a matter of something far more nefarious, indeed dreadful, to the extent that it cannot be named (i.e., ineffable or maybe even sublime, supplanting that which was at one point conceivable only via the natural world), perhaps even imagined?

Regardless of what we point to as the underlying causes of dread today, what we might be able to collectively agree on is the fact that there is, it seems at first glance, very little reason for hope. Perhaps we can relate to the gypsy in Spencer Holst's (1971) postmodern short story "On Hope," who has swum a mile out to sea to dispose of the necklace containing the ostensibly cursed diamond of hope, said to bring "misfortune" to whomever is in possession of it (p. 51). After the gypsy believes he has successfully rid himself of the inauspicious stone, the necklace falls on the fin of a sleeping shark, who swims to the surface to investigate. Just moments after he thinks he is in the clear, the gypsy finds himself in an unenviable position with a shark swimming directly toward him. The narrator declares, "that is where the story ends" (p. 54). Notably, in Holst's story, before the shark devours the gypsy, the narrator metaleptically interrupts with the following line: "But I do not believe that result is as inevitable as it seems at first glance; that is, I believe there are several reasons,

so to speak, for hope" (pp. 54–55). The narrator proceeds to describe three reasons why readers should not give up on hope:

1. I do not think a shark has ever been approached like this before, that is, by a man wondering whether the shark is a miraculous manifestation, or whether it is merely a figment of his own imagination. Such a man would smell different.
2. The man is a gypsy animal trainer.
3. The shark is now in possession of the necklace (p. 55).

Though many readers would naturally focus on a human's minimal odds of surviving a one-on-one encounter with a shark, especially a mile out at sea, the narrative intervention offers an important reminder of key details that make this an unusual case. For instance, readers are reminded that the gypsy is exceptionally skilled as an animal trainer so much so that he was able to train a monkey to steal the diamond of hope. Additionally, the narrator reminds readers that the outlook is perhaps more dire for the shark, rather than the gypsy, for it is in possession of the necklace notorious for bringing misfortune to its owner. Even though it alludes to outcomes that are perhaps unlikely (because under normal circumstances no human could outswim a shark), the story is a reminder not only that hope is an entailment of action and will, but also that it demands thinking beyond the realm of conventional reason and established temporal frameworks. Our book looks to language as a reason, so to speak, for hope.

Hope has always been critical to human survival. However, the surge of right-wing populism, racism, and ethnocentrism around the world in recent years spells hopelessness for many communities, including those whose backgrounds are subject to increased discrimination and precaritization. While for many in the world such developments may seem new, those in periphery contexts have managed survival in perpetual conditions of seeming hopelessness. One notable case is the favela communities of Brazil. Favelas are neighborhoods built by their own residents – usually on the outskirts of cities but sometimes also within urban areas, like Rio de Janeiro's hillside favelas. They were first formed when the then Empire of Brazil reluctantly abolished slavery in 1888 (Valladares, 2019). No form of redress was offered to former enslaved peoples and their descendants, and therefore they squatted on land and built their own homes and neighborhoods (Caldeira, 2017), who would come to be known as *faveladas/os*.[2] *Faveladas/os* were only subject to the benefits of a systemic public policy for housing and infrastructure more than a hundred

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[2] We spent countless hours deliberating before deciding on the expression *faveladas/os*, which represents the feminine form *faveladas* and masculine form *favelados*. Throughout, we will use *faveladas/os* except when we are referring to primary or secondary material that makes explicit reference to one or the other (e.g., in Chapter 3 we discuss Marielle Franco's essay that concerns *faveladas* specifically). Though the expression *favelados/as* (with the masculine form preceding

years later, when Luiz Inácio da Silva, known as Lula, created the Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento, or the Growth Acceleration Program (PAC) in 2007 (Oliveira, 2011). Yet *faveladas/os*, who are primarily racialized as Black, have endured chronic conditions of systemic racism. Further, unlike residents of central areas, they have been subjected to the "crossfire" (Menezes, 2015) between armed normative regimes: the State (i.e., the police) and "crime" (i.e., drug traffic and, in some favelas, *milícias*, groups of police officers who extort residents in exchange for services such as Internet, cable TV, and "security"). We draw on the case of the *faveladas/os* because they have not merely succumbed to the hopelessness embedded in the "crossfire" and the criminalization of their cultural and communicative practices, but have found creative and unexpected ways of surviving material and systemic inequalities. One key resource that *faveladas/os* have relied upon to hope is language, understood in this project as any symbolic resource with communicative intent that has the capacity to both reflect social realities and to enact them. Through language, *faveladas/os* have been able to recalibrate time as a purely ontological phenomenon and to articulate alternative conceptualizations of temporality conducive to hope. They have also been able to use language resources to engage in practices of translation, including creating new communicative registers, toward the establishment of socially equitable futures. In addition, they have been able to use language to engage in creative practices of scaling, making the project of hope discursively manageable and applicable to wider community contexts. Crucially, the use of new media and digital affordances has been key in *faveladas/os* political mobilization, denunciation of human rights violations and police abuse, and valorization of local modes of life and communicative

the feminine) is indeed more common, our usage of the alternative *favelada*s/*os* centers and acknowledges the critical contributions of women to the linguistic production of hope, as our readers will come to see in the pages that follow. And though this choice has the benefit of decentering the male subject, it is far from a perfect choice. Gender marking in Portuguese has been the object of heated political debates (Borba, 2019a, 2022; Borba & Lopes, 2018). In linguistics, a purely structural view might posit that the affix -o (as in *favelado*), unlike -a, is not a mark of gender but a neutral form (Câmara, 1970). This follows a similar pattern of the grammatical dynamics of gender marking in Romance languages. Yet Borba (2019a) and others have collected evidence that there are rationalizations of the use of -o as indexing masculine, rather than neutral, gender. To avoid this ideological connotation, options that feminist, trans, and other activists have suggested have been: -x (*faveladx*), -e (*favelade*), -a/-o (*favelada/o*), or -o and -a (*favelada* and *favelado*). We imagine, and hope to continue to contribute to the production of, a future where gender inclusive alternatives like *faveladx* or *favelade* are in wider circulation. At the present moment of writing this book, however, our interlocutors generally do not self-identify with these descriptors. We even considered, briefly, an all-inclusive label like *faveladas/e/os/x*, but worried that such a label would be too unwieldy and function not as a politically inclusive descriptor but instead as a kind of master signifier, if you will, as a kind of language for the sake of language, distracting readers from the content and message of the work. In other words, our decision is by no means a perfect one, but reflects our best attempt to be mindful of the temporal complexities and contingencies of enregisterment, which is itself never a perfect (or at least a predictable) process.

practices. These instances point not only to how language can communicate hope but also to how it can produce the very conditions of hope. In this sense, this book is not just about the language *of* hope, but language *as* hope.

I.2   Hope as a Public Act

In this section, we will proceed by articulating the importance of a sustained inquiry on language as hope: what language can teach us about hope and how it can be conceived of as a resource for hope. To that end, it would be instructive to describe the importance of the study of hope more generally. A productive starting point might be found in Arjun Appadurai's (2013) *The Future as Cultural Fact*, in which he describes the need for more future-oriented scholarship. And while Appadurai is speaking primarily from his positionality as a cultural anthropologist, his offering of "imagination, anticipation, and aspiration" as "three notable human preoccupations that shape the future as a cultural fact" (p. 286) represents viable topical points for the study of hope in a broad range of fields. Imagination is addressed extensively in his earlier work, *Modernity at Large* (Appadurai, 1996). It was Benedict Anderson (1983), in *Imagined Communities*, who popularized the trope of imagination as a key process for individuals otherwise not intrinsically related to conceive of themselves as members of a unified national community. Anderson, in particular, historicized the emergence of "print capitalism," or the process of producing and distributing print materials such as novels and newspapers as commodities, as a precursor to the possibility of the nation as an imagined community. Through print capitalism, individuals who otherwise had no kinship, friendship, or even relationship could imagine themselves as belonging to a national collective. Appadurai would extend this thesis, describing how community identification in the era of globalization was not dependent on the territorial premises of the nation-state; individuals could instead produce belonging across space through what he described as the "production of locality" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 178).

Anticipation, meanwhile, is understood in relation to the "tension" between the "ethics of possibility" and the "ethics of probability" (Appadurai, 2013, p. 295). Practices of anticipation in accordance with the ethics of probability rely on another's failure or misfortune for personal gain, as is the case in the speculative algorithms of casinos, lotteries, or "catastrophe bonds," in which investors can serve to generate great profits in the event of a natural disaster occurring in a given period of time (p. 297). This view of anticipation, at least in Appadurai's conceptualization, provides an opportunity to understand what might be called a dialectics of hope. Viewing the future in terms of algorithms of probability, the driving force of investment and speculation, entails a treatment of futurity as a zero sum game in which one person's gain is another's loss and vice versa. To speak simplistically, consider for a moment

a wager on the outcome of a sporting event that results in a payout, which invariably means that others will have a negative return, with the bookie, by design, almost always turning a profit. Consider also real estate investors who renovate and upsell properties that will drive up the value of homes in a given neighborhood, pricing out not only a majority of prospective buyers but also many homeowners in the community who bought their homes long ago and can no longer afford upkeep and property taxes. Anticipation, in other words, is an orientation to the future that results in gains for some (usually few) and losses for others (usually many).

The preoccupation with aspiration is perhaps the most pertinent to hope. Appadurai defines aspiration as a "navigational capacity," one in which even "poor people can effectively change the 'terms of recognition' within which they are generally trapped, terms which severely limit their capacity to exercise voice and to the debate the economic conditions in which they are confined" (pp. 289–290). Aspiration, then, does not presume the inevitability of the future as a mere extension of the present. Instead, it rejects that which is taken as a given in the present while negotiating if not demanding alternative arrangements in the future. Appadurai notes that the systematic study of humans and their response to past and present order has led to the codification of a binarized approach to futurity. More specifically, hope tends to be treated as "a product of moments of exception and emergency," based on the idea that the "future is not a routine element of thought and practice in all societies" (2013, p. 292). There is, in other words, something profoundly utopian but simultaneously quotidian about aspiration. Can we view the ordinary, as Kathleen Stewart (2007) writes, in relation to the "little fantasies" that "pop up" in everyday life (p. 48)? Is it possible, likewise, to view the ordinary and thus by extension aspiration, as "a drifting immersion that watches and waits for something to pop up?" (p. 95). We of course do not mean to treat aspiration as a passive process in which one is expected to sit around waiting for opportunities to simply "pop up," or to just "hope for the best," so to speak. Instead, hope is inherently practical, active and action-oriented, especially when viewed as "the political counterpart to the work of the imagination" (Appadurai, 2013, p. 293).

Appadurai's (2013) perspective on hope as a practical affect that engages temporality and the work of imagination in principled ways intersects with our approach to hope. The empirical realities that we discuss in this book suggest that hope is not a form of escapism in the face of a debilitating scenario. Rather, our engagement with those who have been dispossessed by the logics of capitalism teaches us that in the face of uncertainty – navigating for instance the conditions of police brutality and economic oppression – hope is a major form of practical reason enabling people to avoid despair. Through hope as a collective and communicative enactment, the *faveladas/os* that we have engaged in dialogue produce "'balanced judgement and measured insight'

against 'desperate hope and desperate fear'" (Heller & McElhinny, 2017, p. xiv). Further, by reimagining temporality and other semiotic resources, they have been able to live livable lives.

In this book, we therefore embrace a practical or pragmatic approach to hope. Aristotle – who is credited with defining hope as a "waking dream" (Crapanzano, 2003, p. 26) – proposed in his *Nicomachean Ethics* that "acts that derive merely from optimism are not themselves courageous" (Lear, 2006, p. 112). A philosopher who accorded fundamental significance to empirical observation and praxis – and who inspired pragmatic accounts of social life such as those of J. L. Austin (1962) and Saba Mahmood (2005) – Aristotle strived to understand not just the semantic content of an action (e.g., being hopeful or courageous) but fundamentally the virtues and ethical investments that lead subjects to cultivate and embody that modality of action in their everyday lives (see Mahmood, 2005). Hence, realizing that hope can be a manifestation of courage, he stipulated that courage to act – the courage to cultivate and communicate hope – is different from optimism (Lear, 2006). Rather, cultivating hope is work – practical, collective, semiotic work.

We believe that building relations, engaging in dialogue, and fundamentally listening to those who do not live a life of comfort – for instance, those who do not experience the same comfort of not being routinely bothered by the police or the drug traffic as we do – may teach us about producing language as hope. Despite a bleak backdrop – e.g., the "crossfire" between police and the drug trade, systemic racism, and economic inequality – *faveladas/os* produce solutions for everyday life, mobilize themselves politically, produce art, and are active in the workforce (albeit under more precarious and informal conditions than residents of central neighborhoods). As Marielle Franco, a central figure in this study, proposed in her master's thesis on police "pacification" in favelas ahead of the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympics, the idea is to shift the focus away from seeing the subaltern as "needy" (e.g., of literacy or culture), which would require devising strategies of "social assistance" (Franco, M., 2014, p. 14). We read in Marielle's work that, academically, producing language as hope amounts to recalibrating our gaze and looking at "favelas and peripheries as places of production, better described as potency" (p. 14). She adds: "Even in the face of the reality of low investment by the state, residents have invented their various ways of regulating and resisting life: through arts, housing, mobility, encounters, etc." (Franco, M., 2014, p. 14).

Marielle invites us not to prefigure the subaltern as someone who "lacks" – culture, knowledge, or the future. She underlines the urgency of looking at what they *do,* and what we *can learn* from what they do. It is worth pointing out that Marielle is iconic of many authors and interlocutors we summon in this book – she was someone who was born in the favela and who moved across social spaces, including institutional politics and the university. Our point is to

consider *faveladas/os* (and by extension, many peripheral subjects studied globally by sociolinguists) not as "informants" but as "authors" whose intellectual production has much to teach academia. In this sense, the epistemic stance that we pursue in this book is reflective of what Betsy Rymes (2020) has described as citizen sociolinguistics, which we now move to unpack next.

I.3   Citizen Sociolinguistics as a Sociolinguistics of Hope

If we are to take seriously the human capacity to hope, then we need to take seriously the capacities of human knowledge production beyond those who have historically been authorized or credentialed as legitimate agents of knowledge. We are referring, of course, to those with "formal" education in the form of diplomas from accredited institutions of higher education and a "formal" institutional affiliation in the form of a research or teaching position. Historically, individuals belonging to this elite community of researchers have treated those outside the academy as mere research "subjects" rather than true interlocutors, much less intellectual peers. Thinking beyond this narrow epistemological logic is what has inspired proponents of participatory action research (McTaggart, 1991). In this model, not only is the goal of research to effect real world social change, but research subjects are also involved as participants in the design and implementation of the work. Appadurai (2013) refers to this approach to the democratization of research in his theorization of "research as a human right," which demands a view of research as "a generalized capacity to make disciplined inquiries into those things we need to know but do not know yet" (p. 269). Illustrative is Appadurai's involvement with PUKAR, or Partners for Urban Knowledge Action and Research, a nonprofit grassroots community-based organization based in Mumbai that promotes research related to economic development and urban planning. This initiative invites a new conceptualization of "research":

it is not only the production of original ideas and new knowledge (as it is normally defined in academia and other knowledge-based institutions). It is also something simpler and deeper. Research is the capacity to systematically increase the horizons of one's current knowledge, in relation to some task, goal, or aspiration. (p. 282)

Citizen sociolinguistics, or the production of language knowledge by non-linguists, is an intriguing model for community participation in knowledge production, particularly in language research. The notion was initially conceptualized in the work of Rymes and Leone (2014) to encapsulate the ways people use new media language resources to make sense of language phenomena. It was described as the study of "people who use their senses and intelligence to understand the world of language around them" (p. 26). Rymes (2020) develops the notion of citizen sociolinguists in her book *How We Talk about*

Language, noting that she was interested in "providing a process to explore social norms, not a statement of top-down language standards to be adhered to in all cases" (p. 2). As she elaborates: "Instead of looking to experts in the field of Linguistics for definitive diagnoses of language issues, I am suggesting that these institutionally centered voices are just one of many different interesting and personally invested views on language" (p. 2). The basis of citizen sociolinguistics is citizen science, involving "1) Inclusion of citizens in the scientific process; 2) Contributions to both science and the public; and 3) Reciprocality, that is, two-way communication between scientists and the public" (Golumbic, Orr, Baram-Tsabari, & Fishbain, 2017, p. 2). As Svendsen (2018) notes, citizen sociolinguistics thus "requires the inclusion of non-professionals in *doing* sociolinguistic research, in collecting data, in registering them, analysing and interpreting them relative to the level of citizen involvement and collaboration, the research questions and design of the CS-project" (p. 138, emphasis in original).

Our embrace of the citizen sociolinguistics model might appear, on the one hand, somewhat ironic given that *faveladas/os* have frequently been denied the rights of citizenship in Brazil. On the other hand, their claims to citizenship, and the fact that this was a condition that has historically been denied to them, makes our community-oriented approach to language knowledge all the more critical. Indeed, it is from this position of precarious citizenship that *faveladas/os* are able to disrupt expected intellectual (hierarchical) arrangements between the researcher and research "subject." Our interlocutors in Rio de Janeiro favelas, for instance, have devised a very critical stance to the traditional model of extractivist research whereby a scholar extracts data from "informants" and does "aquela coisa da academia," or "that academy thing" (Trajano and Medeiros, 2018, 22:15) with it – that is, does not engage in effective relations of solidarity, disappears without sharing the findings of the study, and so on. Renata Trajano and Thainã Medeiros, members of a favela collective of communication and human rights named Coletivo Papo Reto (Straight Talk Collective), collaboratively produced a dialogue in 2018 that exemplifies the uptake of many favela residents about prototypical hierarchic and extractivist research practices wherein they are positioned as mere sources of data. Thainã and Renata were on *Papo Reto Cast* – a podcast produced by the collective and primarily directed to *faveladas/os* – promoting a seminar held by Raízes Movimento, an NGO from the Complexo do Alemão favelas, aimed at debating and advancing a critical view on research about favelas. In a relaxed and playful style, not uncommon in the sociality and speech action in favelas (see Goldstein, 2003; Silva, 2022), the two *faveladas/os* critique epistemic, linguistic, and economic hierarchies that are often reinforced in interactions between middle-class researchers and peripheral residents. In the excerpt below, Renata and Thainã jointly illustrate some distinguishing traits of researchers that they want to challenge:

Excerpt 0.1   Papo Reto Cast, Complexo do Alemão, 2018

RENATA: Então, essa parada é a galera que vem né, pá, faz contato, manda no
          inbox. "Oi, tudo bem? Como é que você tá?" Mas tipo aquela galera
          que faz a pesquisa [e escreve te explora pra caraca
THAINÃ: [e nós não sabe pra que que é o bagulho=
RENATA: =E nós não sabe pra que
          que é. Porque a pessoa não volta pra dar o retorno
THAINÃ: [e quando
RENATA: [quando volta=
THAINÃ :   =É um negócio que nós não
          entende nada
RENATA: É aquela coisa da academia que pá e prose e aí às vezes muda sua
          fala que não foi aquilo que tu di::sse.

RENATA: So, this is about the people who come, you know, get in touch, send
          us an inbox message. "Hi, how are you?" But it's like that people who do research [and
          they write, they exploit you like hell

THAINÃ: [and we
          don't know the purpose of the stuff=
RENATA: =And we don't know what that is for. Because the
          person doesn't return here to give us feedback
THAINÃ: [and when
RENATA: [when they come back=
THAINÃ :   =It's something we
          don't understand at all
RENATA: It's that academy thing that you do and then sometimes your talk
          changes and it's not what you sa::id.

(Trajano, R. & Medeiros, T., 2018, 21:45–22:20)

Irreverently, Renata and Thainã critique "aquela coisa da academia" or "that academy thing." In other words, they deride the researcher who "exploits (*explora*)" their time (usually without financially rewarding them for the time spent in interviews and other interactions). They also say that many times the researcher does not even explain the research topic ("nós não sabe pra que que é o bagulho / we don't know the purpose of the stuff") – neither before nor after the research is completed ("a pessoa não volta pra dar retorno / the person doesn't return here to give us feedback"). In this prototypical model, when the researcher actually does offer feedback, the findings are written in a register that is not accessible to *faveladas/os* ("É um negócio que a gente não entende nada / It's something we don't understand at all"). Renata also points out the control that researchers exercise over the record of their talk, transforming the entextualized discourse into units that *faveladas/os* do not recognize ("às vezes muda sua fala que não foi aquilo que tu disse / sometimes your talk changes and it's not what you said").

While we are aware that to entextualize – to lift "a stretch of linguistic production out of its interactional setting" (Bauman & Briggs, 1990, p. 73) – is to produce a new text, Renata and Thainã's reflexive activity in critiquing what is prototypically (or at least stereotypically) done with the entextualization of their speech (and of their time and generosity) is of utmost importance; and this for a few reasons. First, the two *faveladas/os* offer an important example of citizen sociolinguistic analysis. They use the semiotic resources at their disposal to "understand the world of language around them" (Rymes & Leone, 2014, p. 16). In their world of language, they indicate that it is not only ourselves as ethnographers who "invent the culture" of the native – to use Roy Wagner's (1981) classic notion of interpreting in anthropology as inventing the other. They also point out that natives "invent" the ethnographer; that is, they situate us in their regimes of value and interpretation. And this leads to the second point of importance of Renata and Thainã's comment: We believe that if critical sociolinguists are interested in understanding "social problems in which language plays a key role" (Moita Lopes, 2006, p. 16), we cannot disregard asymmetries that affect interactions whose textual portions will be subsequently entextualized as data. Indeed, in his discussion of methods in linguistics for "extracting" communicative units from the field, Blommaert (2013) concludes that power imbalances embedded in the pragmatics of data production affect what we offer as "results" in our research.

In the sequence of their dialogue, Renata and Thainã also critique citational practices in academia. Thainã says, "no final das contas aquela pessoa ela vai recortar o que a gente falou, vai misturar com um autor, geralmente um autor europeu que não sabe porra nenhuma de favela," or "at the end of the day, that person will cut out what we talked about, mixing it with an author, usually a European author who doesn't know a damn thing about the favela" (24:03–24:11). Yet they both offer a remedy for this non-valorized citational practice in favela activism. They suggest that to understand the favela, one ought to read "other philosophers" – favela intellectuals such as rappers Racionais MCs, funk composers Tati Quebra Barraco, MC Orelha, and MC Smith, or samba musician Bezerra da Silva. It is worth emphasizing that many *faveladas/os* and peripheral residents are also academic scholars, including authors who are fundamental to the sociolinguistics of hope we devise in this book (e.g., Franco, A., 2021; Franco, M., 2014, 2018; Lima, 2015; Souza, 2020). We believe that the least we can do here is to engage in more sustainable citational practices.

We read in Renata and Thainã's reflexive model an echo of Appadurai's view of research as a human right. At a most basic level, both *faveladas/os* advance an idea that if producing data is an interactional practice, then both scholars and citizens ought to be privy to the rights over what is produced. Fundamentally, they claim

that producing academic knowledge involves financial resources, social distinction, and academic authentication, elements of the social world that impact our interactions with interlocutors and ultimately what we offer as "situated knowledge" in our research output. Note that Renata and Thainã bring attention to what might be called the "economics of research exchanges," analogous to Bourdieu's (1977) pioneering "The economics of linguistic exchanges." They discuss the time that they spend giving interviews, the usual lack of compensation for their gift, and even the risks of "subir e descer a favela . . . e o cara não paga nem uma água pra tu," or "going up and down the favela . . . and the dude doesn't even pay you a bottle of water." In a sense, Renata and Thainã invite us to rethink the conventional divide between the researcher and the layperson, and they do so by thinking more specifically in terms of wealth and poverty. What we are alluding to here is that the very idea of who is traditionally regarded as a legitimate researcher becomes a rather simple one when one considers how legitimacy is delineated according to access to wealth and resources. Scientific research, for instance, is dependent on millions of dollars of government grants or philanthropic endowments. Research is very much a matter of the rich getting richer, as researchers employed at the wealthiest institutions have not only the highest salaries, but also access to the most opportunities, which in turn lead to more extramural and intramural funding compensated through promotions, recognitions, and increased compensation. Further, though not always the case of course, even students with the privilege to attend the wealthiest and most "prestigious" universities tend to come from wealthier backgrounds. These students are in turn exposed to the latest developments in research by professors with access to the resources necessary to be at the cutting edge of research in their respective fields. While such observations should be painfully obvious, it is not uncommon for folks to assume that attending a "prestigious" or highly ranked university is indicative of being "smart." The discourse around who is fit for research then can be misleading because we are not accustomed to seeing those from disadvantaged backgrounds, like Thainã and Renata, as the beneficiaries and producers of research.

   One way forward might be found in what Ngũgĩ describes as "poor theory." As he notes in his work on *Globalectics*, "Poor is used in the sense of appertaining to poverty, for even in a critical theory one does not want to give dignity to poverty by according it theory, but rather to accord dignity to the poor as they fight poverty, including, dare I say, poverty of theory" (p. 2). The possibility of learning from the poor is illustrated by Ngũgĩ through the example of South African poet and sculptor Pitika Ntuli, who makes art from waste. He describes his encounter with Ntuli:

In parting, he gave me two quill-like shapes with tiny human heads at the tip. He had carved them out of elephant bones he had collected in the forest near his home in

Kwazululand. They were no longer just bones. Storytellers, he told me. He knew I told stories. (p. 5).

To clarify, poor theory is only in part about learning through practices of unexpected resourcefulness by those on the peripheries, as it is only in part about finding ways of seeing value in that which has hitherto been undervalued if not treated as waste altogether. The value of poor theory, we would argue, is not merely in appreciating that which we readily discard but instead to reconsider our understanding of, or indeed assumptions about, the aspirations of those on the peripheries of society such as *faveladas/os* and many other interlocutors of global sociolinguists.

Appraising our assumptions vis-à-vis peripheral subjects' metadiscourses about their practices and aspirations is a critical task. Our colleague Adriana Facina (2021) writes that an interview that she and her research group carried out in 2012 with a young funk MC, Raphael Calazans, in the Complexo do Alemão favelas was fundamental to "confront our middle-class intellectualized gaze" (p. 3) about *faveladas/os* and their aspirations. In the interview, she asked the young Black artist "what was there of art and culture in that favela before the arrival of the Pacifying Police Units?" The group of researchers, of which Daniel is part, expected as a response "an inventory of groups and activities: funk parties, *pagode* concerts, graffiti collectives, dance and theater groups, etc. However, his answer pointed out the existence of a 'culture of survival,' based on a solidarity necessary for daily existence in the face of a precarity of rights" (p. 3). One of Calazans's examples was the *"gatos"* – improvised and illegal connections of essential services such as Internet, water, and electricity – which are for him part of solidarity practices that made the favela possible. Facina notes that the middle-class intellectualized assumption shared by her and the research group was that "their artistic creativity existed *despite* precariousness" (p. 3, Facina's emphasis). But the young MC "presented a logic in which art is built *from* an experience of scarcity that yields knowledge, aesthetics, and modes of social interaction that he dubbed 'culture of survival'" (her emphasis). His epistemic and artistic aspirations did not emerge *despite* but *from* precarity (see Deumert, 2022).[3] Adriana Facina's remarks about Calazans confronting our assumptions – whereby the young funk MC indirectly questions our referentialist expectations (about a repertoire of practices) by instead theorizing about what it is to produce art from precarious living conditions – further suggest the importance of fieldwork for continuously revising theories that usually undergird our presumptions.

On the basis of this engagement with sociolinguistic knowledge produced by lay citizens, our study of *favelada/o* languaging is on the one hand an attempt to

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[3] We engage Deumert's (2022) work on the sociolinguistics of the specter in greater detail in Chapter 4 and the Conclusion.

present a case study of how communities navigate a unique set of circumstances to produce hope. Simultaneously, it is the material for a broader theorizing of language *as hope*. In other words, the aspirational knowledge being identified and conceptualized in this project is an inherently reciprocal one as its local action is simultaneously a global action, which can be stimulating and instructive for not only sociolinguists but also broader publics.

I.4   Hope as Method for Uneasy Times

Writing about hope demands a methodology that is conducive to understanding its complexities and recognizing its possibilities. A productive methodological premise is perhaps to be found in Anand Pandian's (2019) *A Possible Anthropology: Methods for Uneasy Times*. Pandian acknowledges the field of anthropology's legacies of exploitation and colonial domination, and along with it the fetishization and exoticization of peoples coded as "different." The field, unsurprisingly, has developed a reputation of merely documenting the rituals, beliefs, conventions, and everyday routines and practices of people of a given cultural formation (e.g., "People from this culture worship this deity," "People from this part of the world value collectivism," "Every person on this island on this day of the year eats this food item in honor of a ritual and I, the ethnographer, am the only person in the English-speaking world who knows about it," etc.). As we grapple with the uncertainty of living in a world increasingly described as the anthropocene, the task of ethnography today, Pandian argues, is to imagine a "humanity yet to come" (p. 11). In order to achieve this, Pandian encourages ethnographers to embrace the unpredictable and the unknown as conditions of the human experience, which can in turn help to leverage the work of ethnography into imagining different futures. This is not to suggest that our orientation to hope is based on a wait-and-see model of futurity. Instead, we have actively embraced the unpredictable paths of knowledge that have emerged throughout our research process, learning from our interlocutors and fundamentally recalibrating our understanding of hope along the way.

Turning more explicitly to the question of hope, one of our primary inspirations is what Hirokazu Miyazaki (2004) has called "the method of hope." Hope, as Miyazaki suggests, is not merely a "subject" (p. 3), but a "methodological problem for knowledge and, ultimately … a *method* of knowledge deployed across a wide spectrum of knowledge practices" (p. 2, emphasis in original). This realization emerges from an ethnographic engagement with the Suvavou people in Fiji and their continued attempts to gain reparations from the government for their land. Though continued appeals have been unsuccessful in that they have not resulted in material returns, they enable a consideration of hope as method, distinct from the alternative of desire. Whereas desire

"invites one to analyze it with its infinitely deferrable quality," hope invites a "radical temporal reorientation of knowledge" (p. 5). Significantly, for Miyazaki, hope is not merely a framework for making sense of the Suvavou people's continued appeals to territorial justice, but an approach to ethnographic knowledge production whereby conventional assumptions about what does or does not count as knowledge are not always applicable. Miyazaki's (2004) at once theoretical and empirical observation that hope lies in the "reorientation of knowledge" (p. 130) is echoed in a number of accounts of hope that we discuss in this book: from Ernst Bloch's (1986) pioneering suggestion of hope as a practical affect that reorients the subject from a wishful to an willful stance towards political life to Jonathan Lear's (2006) account of hope as a fundamental resource for the Crows' reorientation of their frameworks of intelligibility and temporality in the face of their being confined by the U.S. government into a reservation in the nineteenth century. In their active metacognitive work, the Crow devised a "radical hope," Lear (2006) explains, "radical in that it is aiming for a subjectivity that is at once Crow and does not yet exist" (p. 104).

This "radical ... reorientation of knowledge" has led us into gauging a "method of hope" among *faveladas/os*. While we hope to make this method clear in the chapters ahead, we believe it is productive to unpack the reorientations of our own academic paths into crafting this project of studying language as hope. The research that resulted in this book can be traced to an ongoing collaboration dating back to 2014 on what we then referred to as the "sociolinguistics of hope." We were introduced by our common friend Sylvia Nam when Daniel was briefly visiting the University of California, Irvine, in the fall of 2014. What was supposed to be a quick lunch break turned into an ongoing conversation between Daniel and Jerry about overlapping research interests. Our interaction would soon turn into a shared agenda of understanding how subjects in different global contexts navigate or survive uncertainty, precarity, or violence predicated on the unequal economic and political arrangements of globalization by reimagining sociolinguistic resources. We initially imagined a comparative multi-site study as a direct response to key moments related to the question of hope as a political act. The fall of 2014 saw the emergence of the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong which, as an independent Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, was experiencing an encroachment of its universal suffrage rights. In the fall of 2016, Donald J. Trump, a real estate mogul with no experience in politics and a deep commitment to the principles of white supremacy and misogyny, was elected to the U.S. presidency. Trump's election represented a moment of impending hopelessness for many in the country, ranging from ethnic minorities, religious minorities, members of the LGBTQ community, undocumented immigrants, and citizens of the lower and lower-middle classes. That same year also saw the emergence of the Candlelight

Vigil in South Korea, a series of protests against political corruption of then-president Park Geun Hye, the first woman president in the nation's history.

Yet on March 14, 2018, a major political catastrophe affected our conversations and refocused our study back to Rio de Janeiro. Marielle, the aforementioned queer Black scholar and progressive councilwoman, was assassinated. This event had a strong impact on Daniel's ongoing fieldwork in Complexo do Alemão, a group of favelas contiguous to the Complexo da Maré favelas where Marielle was born, because he had interacted with Marielle in activist circles and his interlocutors were themselves part of the mourning movement that was surfacing. The mourners' uncanny engagement with temporality along with their principled ways of narrating sociolinguistic inequalities compelled us to refocus our inquiry in order to better understand the temporal renarrations and sociolinguistic practices that were unfolding before our eyes. We witnessed, both locally and around the world, a mourning movement that refused to give in to despair by engaging with hope as a form of practical reason (Lear, 2006). In response, we decided to focus our collaborative inquiry on the Brazilian context in order to address this emergent recalibration of language and temporal resources towards hope.

In this book, we draw on empirical materials from the vibrant and globalized mourning movement for Marielle. This crime against Brazilian democracy has not yet been solved – today we know who perpetrated the murder, but not who commissioned it, nor their motives (Lucchese et al., 2022; Perry, 2022). The mourning movement – articulated mainly by Instituto Marielle Franco, an NGO created by her family, but also by a grassroot action of thousands of people around the world led especially by Black women – has taken center stage in Brazilian politics. Mourners have challenged biological temporality, singing that Marielle "lives" and is "present" among them. This book also draws on data from Daniel's ethnography with residents, teachers, artists, and activists from the Complexo do Alemão favelas, initiated in 2012, and from our collaborative research that has since 2016 yielded an archive of interactions in the online-offline nexus (Blommaert, 2019), including focus groups, interviews, and artistic and autobiographical materials in activist contexts in both Brazil and the United States.

Our collaborative research relies strongly on ethnography and some of its established forms of data generation, such as participant observation of interactions, audio and video recording, interviews, and transcription of recorded materials with the help of research participants. Indeed, our collaborators from favelas display a high reflexivity about the research process itself. Thanks to affirmative actions passed during Lula da Silva (2003–2010) and Dilma Rousseff's (2011–2016) incumbencies, many of our interlocutors in the field have themselves had access to more education, including graduate education and research. Their access to the university was also made possible through

other forms of collaboration, such as Marielle's entrance into Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio), a private research university, in 1999, prior to affirmative action; only in 2003 would the Brazilian legislature turn racial quotas for access to universities and public employment into law. Thanks to a grassroots preparatory course for favelados (see Duncan, 2021), Marielle passed the entrance exam at PUC-Rio and was able to receive a scholarship. Later, she completed a master's from Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF). Marielle was, in other words, a brilliant and ambitious scholar, and even in 2016, according to our interlocutors in the field, she was contemplating whether to apply for PhD programs or run for the city council, eventually deciding to pursue the latter.

Although not all of our interlocutors followed the same academic trajectory, in the past decade, *faveladas/os* in Rio de Janeiro have formulated a stance on knowledge that they call *nós-por-nós* (Souza, 2020; Fabrício & Melo, 2020), translatable in English both as "us-for-ourselves" (taking care of ourselves instead of waiting for external aid) and "us-by-ourselves" (relating our own stories and academic accounts). In section I.III, Thainã and Renata enact a *nós-por-nós* stance in their announcement of a seminar on research on favelas promoted by a local NGO, Raízes em Movimento. They display discomfort with outside researchers who do not valorize their gift, and they call attention to local intellectuals who would enact different citational practices in their production of knowledge about peripheries. Yet *nós-por-nós* also means they-themselves studying their practices. Our engagement with local forms of knowledge and scholarship produced by *faveladas/os*, alongside their critical uptake of social justice frameworks and modes of production of academic knowledge about favelas ("extractionist" rather than collaborative and mutually benefiting fieldwork) opens up a methodological approach that we envisage as innovative in scholarship about (and from) the Global South. Our methodological approach is therefore predicated on our listening to and collaborating with research participants, and fundamentally on our engagement with their uptake of problematic modes of production (such as approaching a *favelada/o* for an interview and writing a monograph on materials extracted from the field in a language/register that is inaccessible to those who helped generate the data and theory). This ethic of collaboration and knowledge production and distribution is fundamental to our conceptualization of *Language as Hope*.

I.5   Book Overview

Chapter 1 outlines a theorization of language as hope. Though our project draws primarily from the languaging of *faveladas/os*, a broader theorization of hope is necessary not only for us to make sense of such language practices but to ensure the applicability of our inquiry beyond our cases in point. We begin

with an understanding of language not merely as a fixed language system to communicate reality as such, but as an inherently flexible and negotiable practice that can reconstitute realities, in the sense of "languaging" (see Li, 2018). We approach languaging in relation to various conceptualizations of hope, beginning with Bloch's (1986) pioneering account of hope as both an affect and a principle of explanation. As an affect, "Hope goes out of itself, makes people broad instead of confining them" (p. 3). Temporally, hope orients people to the "Not-Yet-Being," towards expansion and potentiality. This view of hope is complemented with various treatments within the social sciences and in sociolinguistics more specifically. In so doing, we propose that those who must grapple with enveloping challenges predicated on regimes of violence and economic dispossession do not merely succumb to hopelessness but instead have found ways to recast temporality, engage in tactical cooperation, and reimagine sociolinguistic resources in and through their everyday languaging toward the production of hope.

The purpose of Chapter 2 is to advance the introduction and provide socio-historical context necessary to understand the complexities of language and hope in Brazil. While Brazil is one of the world's wealthiest nations it is simultaneously notorious for having one of the largest and rapidly increasing rates of class and income inequality in the world (Loureiro, 2020). In addition, while it is known for having the largest population of peoples of the African diaspora (Parra et al., 2003), it is also known for its longstanding history of anti-Black violence (Afolabi, 2009; Butler, 1998; Twine, 1997). Indeed, Brazil's culture of anti-Blackness came to be exacerbated under former president Jair Bolsonaro, who weaponized racist discourse for his political gain (Alfonso, 2020). Nowhere are the stratifications along social, economic, and racial lines more concentrated than in the favelas across the state. *Faveladas/os* are subject to the terror of paralegal militias, drug factions, intense poverty, and uneven access to public services needed not only for socioeconomic advancement but also survival. While the favelas, from this perspective, are spaces of seeming hopelessness, they are also locations of intense cultural production, everyday creativity, and most crucially, survival and hope. Critically, as we will demonstrate, the ways in which *faveladas/os* – and especially the activists from the three main collectives we study in this book: Instituto Raízes em Movimento, Instituto Marielle Franco, and Coletivo Papo Reto – practice language and enact hope offering important lessons on the feasibility of hope into the twenty-first century.

The next chapter, "Hope in the Present," focuses on how hope demands an ever-shifting reorientation to time. We engage more fully with the case of Marielle Franco, an icon of hope for the dispossessed. We trace her spectral presence in the range of protests and demonstrations that erupted following her death, which featured mantras such as "*Marielle, presente.*" We additionally

analyze ethnographic accounts of women who were, in different ways, influenced by Marielle, online archives of speeches by Marielle and her family and colleagues, and news articles and social media material that circulated in the months following her murder. Additionally, we show how hope in Marielle's communicative practice had an important pedagogic dimension in that she led others in the cultivation of adequate virtues, affects, and ideologies for surviving Brazilian historical inequities and formations of violence. Some of the effects of this languaging of hope are evident in the fact that several Black women have been elected to different houses of Brazil's parliament. We thus illustrate how hope demands a collective reorientation to time – a disruption of the teleological time of progress, inverting taken-for-granted relations of causality. Temporality, in this sense, is "metaleptic" in that it does not necessarily refer to time as chronological, which limits our orientation to the "future" in a predetermined manner. In narrative theory, metalepsis has been defined as the "transition from one narrative level to another" (Genette, 1980, p. 234) or "a deliberate transgression between the world of the telling and the world of the told" (Pier, 2016, p. 1). Through this orientation to time, we are able to make sense of how Marielle, in spite of her death, is still *presente* in teaching others how to flourish, and more broadly, how the language of hope does not operate along the static coordinates of time as fixed and finite.

Chapter 4, "The Enregisterment of Hope," presents a treatment of hope via an engagement with the complex interrelationship between communicative resources and their emergent indexical values. Hope, in other words, as a language practice, is presented here as an entailment of sociolinguistic enregisterment. Language, after all, invariably operates along regimes of signification – that is to say, meanings and values associated with various registers are productions of language ideological stances. Meanwhile, our empirical cases point to the importance of reflexive practices in calibrating language and semiosis as hope in favelas. We offer an extended discussion of the *papo reto* (straight talk) activist register, an emergent translational activist register from the favelas that has been instrumental in recasting convoluted bureaucratic language in a manner that is legible to those who have not had access to extensive formal education and acculturation to mainstream political communicative conventions, which have historically been deployed to exacerbate socioeconomic inequities in Brazil. After a brief comparison to other historical forms of "straight talk," we outline some of the formal and discursive features that have come to be associated with *papo reto*, including directness, preference for objects of discourse associated to racial and socioeconomic inequalities, and suspension of face concerns. We afterwards analyze instances in which Marielle and other *favelada/o* activists have located spaces for *papo reto* in their activist work, disrupting the exclusionary language ideologies and normative regimes in Brazil.

The fifth chapter, "Scaling Hope," centers on the role of scaling in the enactment of hope. More specifically, we foreground how hope is not merely an abstract aspiration but also a principled, time-oriented pragmatic praxis. In order to do so, we showcase how hope can be meaningfully pursued and actualized when appropriately scaled through pedagogical work. Our illustrative cases in point in this chapter include Instituto Raízes em Movimento, Instituto Marielle Franco, and Coletivo Papo Reto. We examine, for instance, the case of how Raízes em Movimento appropriates and rescales the trope of "circulando," a policing practice premised on the criminalization of *faveladas/os*. We afterwards examine the case of artistic and organizational responses to the historical and contemporary silencing of Black voices in Brazil, examining the case of Favela Não Se Cala alongside the activist work of the Instituto Marielle Franco. We then look to the work of Coletivo Papo Reto who perform pedagogical work representing the transformative ethos of *papo reto* activist register. The work of these collectives highlights the teachable – scalable – dimensions of hope through sociolinguistic action, by which hope comes to be rescaled from mere abstraction toward a form of social change.

In the Conclusion, we outline a series of methodological and ethical considerations for scholars interested in researching the intersections of language and hope, particularly as they are practiced and manifested among marginalized and disenfranchised communities. As we showed earlier in this introduction, *faveladas/os* reveal a great deal of awareness of the extractive tendencies of field research. Their critical stance is in advancing an agenda for sociolinguistic scholarship that is reflexive to more responsible, sustainable, and dialogic practices vis-à-vis interlocutors' agendas and ethical concerns. Further, our empirical cases throughout this book will, by attending to knowledge about language produced by everyday people, show the inherent capacities of everyday people to develop metalinguistic knowledge that is most impactful and indeed *hopeful*. We therefore emphasize the need to be mindful of alternative and unconventional forms of knowledge production toward an ongoing understanding of the ways in which language can lead to hopeful futures. In short, insofar that hope demands that we reorient our view of the future and temporality more broadly, an understanding of language as hope demands that we reorient our assumptions of what counts as legitimate knowledge about language.