

LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE (FOLA 4931, SOWJ 4931 and ENGL 4170)

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Course description

In this course, you will learn about the ways in which linguistic diversity mediates social justice in a world that is undergoing rapid change due to increasing migration and globalization. We will explore questions like the following: What is the relationship between language and power? How does linguistic prejudice contribute to social inequality? How does linguistic stratification contribute to cultural domination? We will engage with scholarly and journalistic work that focuses on the linguistic dimensions of social inequality, and we will examine real-world instances of linguistic injustice.

Learning objectives

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Describe how language and power intersect at micro and macro levels of social structure.
2. Analyze the structure of language at the level of sounds, words, sentences and conversations, and explain how these linguistic forms correlate with social structure and power.
3. Critique various accounts of linguistic injustice and the implications of these accounts for social advantage or disadvantage.
4. Critically evaluate statements and attitudes (including your own) about language, and human beings as language speakers.

Course materials

1. Piller, Ingrid. 2016. *Linguistic diversity and social justice*.
2. Lippi-Green, Rosina. 2012. *English with an Accent: Language, Ideology & Discrimination in the United States* (2nd Ed)
3. Additional required reading materials on D2L

Course components

1. *Reading journal* (10%): For every session, 1/3 of the students in the class will write a reflection answering 3 questions on a D2L discussion thread. Each student participating that day must also reply to, at least, two of their classmates' posts. You must post your reflection and your reply by 11:59 pm the day before class, so that you are prepared to lead the in-class discussion. You will complete a total of 6 journal entries.
2. *Participation* (10%): You are expected to attend all class sessions, complete all readings prior to class, and be an active participant during class. Twice during the semester, you will earn a grade for participation that takes into consideration your attendance, having read and completed all work before class, contributions to pair and group work, and contributions to class discussion.
3. *Short papers* (25%): You will write 3 short papers (4-5 pp.). (1) Summary and response to selected article. (2) Sociolinguistic analysis of film/television show using theoretical framework. (3) Critical reflection on language and social justice, incorporating examples from your life.

4. *Group quizzes* (15%): There will be 3 in-class quizzes to assess your understanding of the material during the semester. These quizzes will be completed in groups assigned by the instructor.
5. *Final project* (30%) *and presentation* (10%): Working in groups, you will choose one of the themes of the course and conduct research on an issue related to linguistic diversity and social justice. The project will include fieldwork and the use of academic sources. You will produce a piece of genre of your choice (written essay, video documentary, podcast, website, etc) and you will share your findings with the class in the last few weeks of the semester.

Grading scale

A	93-100	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	F	0-62
B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69		

Tentative course schedule

WEEK 1

T 1/15 **Introduction to the course, language, and social justice**
 - Piller – Ch. 1

TH 1/17 **Linguistic facts, linguistic diversity and stratification**
 - Lippi-Green – Ch. 1
 - Piller – Ch. 2

WEEK 2

T 1/22 **Myths about language**
 - Lippi-Green – Ch. 3, 4
 - Watch *American Tongues*

TH 1/24 **Myths about language**
 Lippi-Green – Ch. 5
 - Piller – Ch. 3

WEEK 3

T 1/29 **Linguistic diversity in education**
 - Lippi-Green – Ch. 6
 - Piller – Ch. 5.

TH 1/31 **Linguistic diversity in education (cont.)**
 - Lippi-Green – Ch. 16
 - First short paper due (1) Summary and response to:
 Rickford, J.R. (1999) "The Ebonics Controversy in My Backyard: A Sociolinguist's Experiences and Reflections." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 3: 267–275.

WEEK 4

T 2/5 **Linguistic discrimination in children's culture**
 - Lippi-Green – Ch. 7

- Jeff Guo – “Researchers have found a major problem with ‘The Little Mermaid’ and other Disney movies”. The Washington Post.
- Nash Dunn – “Language, Gender and Disney Princesses”. NC State University News.

TH 2/7

Language in the media

- Lippi-Green – Ch. 8
- Popp, R.K. (2006) “Mass Media and the Linguistic Marketplace: Media, Language, and Distinction.”

WEEK 5

T 2/12

Group quiz 1

TH 2/14

Language in the judicial system

- Lippi-Green – Ch. 10

WEEK 6

T 2/19

Language in the judicial system (cont.)

- Rickford and King (2016) “Language and linguistics on trial: Hearing Rachel Jeantel (and other vernacular speakers) in the courtroom and beyond.”

TH 2/21

Linguistic diversity at work

- Piller – Ch. 4
- Lippi-Green – Ch. 9

WEEK 7

T 2/26

Linguistic diversity and global justice

- Piller – Ch. 7

TH 2/28

Linguistic profiling and fair housing

- Lippi-Green – Ch. 17
- Purnell et al. (1999) “Perceptual and Phonetic Experiments on American English Dialect Identification”.

WEEK 8

T 3/5

Linguistic diversity in the Southern US

- Lippi-Green – Ch. 11
- Tillery et al (2000) “The Nationalization of a Southernism”
- Second short paper due (2) Sociolinguistic analysis of film/television show using theoretical framework.

TH 3/7

Group quiz 2

SPRING BREAK (3/10 to 3/17)

WEEK 9

T 3/19

Linguistic diversity in Hawaii

- Lippi-Green – Ch. 12

- Pennybacker, Mindy. "What Boddah You?: The Authenticity Debate (Lois-Ann Yamanaka)." The Nation.

TH 3/21

Foreign accents and discrimination

- Lippi-Green – Ch. 13
- Rubin, D. (1992) "Nonlanguage Factors Affecting Undergraduates' Judgments of Nonnative English-Speaking Teaching Assistants"

WEEK 10

T 3/26

Spanish speakers in the U.S.

- Lippi-Green – Ch. 14

TH 3/28

Mock Spanish

- Hill, J. "Mock Spanish: A Site For The Indexical Reproduction Of Racism In American English"
- Callahan, L (2010) "Speaking with (dis)respect: a study of reactions to Mock Spanish"

WEEK 11

T 4/2

Asian Americans and linguistic discrimination

- Lippi-Green – Ch. 15
- Hosoda, M. (2007) Listeners' Cognitive and Affective Reactions to English Speakers with Standard American English and Asian Accents

TH 4/4

Group quiz 3

WEEK 12

T 4/9

Course conclusions: linguistic justice

- Piller – Ch. 8
- Lippi-Green – Ch. 18

TH 4/11

Course conclusions: linguistic justice

- Third short paper due (3) Critical reflection on language and social justice, incorporating examples from your life

WEEK 13

Student panel presentations and discussions.

WEEK 14

Student panel presentations and discussions.

WEEK 15

Student panel presentations and discussions.