

The Topic and Governing Question of Our FIG

Lane's mission is to provide quality, comprehensive, accessible, inclusive, learning-centered educational opportunities that promote equitable student success. As language and math instructors, we are committed to an intentional and continuous deconstruction process of our teaching and learning content and pedagogical practices to support this larger mission through linguistic justice.

We explored the theory, research, and practice of linguistic racism in college writing and language development to identify and dismantle teaching and learning practices that perpetuate white linguistic supremacy, as presented in the book by April Baker-Bell, *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy*.

Our Guiding Inquiry:

How can we move toward linguistic liberation in our classes, and programming, through a pedagogical approach that intentionally centers the linguistic, cultural, racial, intellectual, and self-confidence needs of our BIPOC students?

Readings and Resources

This FIG centered around Baker-Bell's work in the book, *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy*.

We also identified several other helpful resources including:

Alison M. Douglas (2022) Seeing Shakira: Critical Reflections on Unspoken Rules of Whiteness, *Journal of College Reading and Learning*, 52:4, 230-235, DOI: [10.1080/10790195.2022.2121786](https://doi.org/10.1080/10790195.2022.2121786)

Flores, N., & García, O. (2017). A critical review of bilingual education in the United States: From basements and pride to boutiques and profit. *Annual review of applied linguistics*, 37, 14-29. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190517000162>

Otheguy, R., García, O., & Reid, W. (2015). Clarifying translanguaging and deconstructing named languages: A perspective from linguistics. *Applied linguistics review*, 6(3), 281-307.

Patrick L. Bruch Jr (2023) On the Challenges of Decomposing Whiteness: Foundations for Antiracist Literacies, *Journal of College Reading and Learning*, 53:4, 280-297, DOI: [10.1080/10790195.2023.2251138](https://doi.org/10.1080/10790195.2023.2251138)

Volume 52, issue 4 of *Journal College Reading and Learning Association* is all about antiracist reading and literacy practices: <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ucrl20/52/4?nav=toCList>

Description of Sessions

Discussion Topics Over our 5 Sessions:

- Stigmatized language, thinking about pronunciation patterns and how they are social constructs
- How do we take the theory and work with it when we have students in front of us, such as their essays? What do we do at this student level to support language inclusion when we essentially are within a system that requires outcomes that are entrenched in White Mainstream English?
- Do we require students to change something fundamentally about a student, such as their language, in a corrective way, or contextualize their experience in the world through awareness? So students make language choices rather than having them forced onto them.
- These stigmas are what people start to believe about themselves.
- How monolingualism in the US enforces these stigmas, anti-bilingualism in child development, and discounted despite a larger body of evidence.
- Sense of loss, language loss, and attempt at recuperation for generations to come.
- The book centers around action. And pushes us in a direction to act.
- Radical imagination, positivity, and a lot of stories in academics are focused on oppression, and this book includes the whole experience including creativity, joy, and RESISTANCE.
- Using the master's tools will not undo the master's dominance.
- Language can connect us through history.
- These are the things that I want to be able to do, how do I do this without it being extremely problematic, how do we do it as educators? Showing value in our classes. Not correcting language. Bring in stories that are celebrations, and joyful things that are inclusive of language, bring in perspectives, and have critical conversations all together, be vulnerable in putting ourselves on the spot to facilitate these conversations. Feel like we need more work on how to do this. See sections on teacher attitudes, and curriculum.
- The dominant gaze...where are you going to point your own gaze?
- The concept of talking with an accent, recognizing that we all speak with an accent, and is deeply personal, a personal choice, and not something that should be enforced by a teacher/instructor.
- *Dominant gaze* and language "cover-up," and the generational divide we often see with language attitudes in our students
- Removing one from their language, criminalizing language, is part of a dehumanization, and strategic part of slavery.
- Language of Resistance, use language as a form of resistance, resilience, heritage connection, and language, connect through language.

Overall Outcomes

Shared by FIG members:

From this FIG, I gained a community across disciplines that built my understanding of how linguistic justice can be built from many angles, and this made clear how important working together in different spheres/disciplines is with systemic issues.

Professionally, I gained fantastic examples of activities, reflective questions, and modes of engagement that Dr. April Baker-Bell used in her work and research to help students and teachers grow their understanding of anti-black racism and build tools to pursue linguistic justice.

I benefited from reading the book and having the opportunity to talk about takeaways and concepts with the group. Linguistic justice is a topic I've been interested in since graduate school, but I've always struggled to figure out how to put the theory into practice. That's perhaps what I appreciated most about the book: we saw an example of what this kind of work can look like in a classroom setting. I also really enjoyed having the chance to talk with ABSE and ESL folks about teaching. It is so valuable for Writing instructors like myself to have the opportunity to learn more about the ESL and ABSE classes, because many of those students end up in the Writing sequence, and it's useful to get a sense of the kind of work and learning environment they experience elsewhere at Lane. I am also always so inspired by the commitment and passion that the ABSE/ESL faculty have for their students and their work as instructors. I'm emerging from the FIG feeling a renewed sense of hope and optimism about my work at Lane.

I found the book enlightening. On a personal note, connecting with other colleagues both in and outside our division was a good reminder about our shared goals -- why we do what we do, and that the students should always be at the center.

In my ongoing work to dismantle oppressive ideologies in writing, and instead center teaching and learning around assessed-based perspectives on diverse writing voices, this FIG provided me the with opportunity to think about and improve my teaching practices in a supportive and committed environment. I learned a lot from my colleagues, found shared challenges, and learned new applications and approaches to help liberate language from the idea there is only one version of English that is intellectually superior in academics.

Sharing our Learning

- We discussed the following ways to share (and continue!) our learning:
- Build a working resource document that can be shared with our colleagues.
- Meet monthly to read an article, watch a video, listen to a podcast once a month, term, invite others, and continue our discussion.
- Considering submitting for Spring Conference, Subset of Spring conference.
- Actively seek ongoing professional development opportunities.

This FIG would like to thank the FIG committee for this opportunity to share and grow as educators.

