OUTCOMES OF THE PROSEMINAR
A LINGUISTICS OF THE OPPRESSED

a zine

WHY a ZiNe?

- Sol Tovar

Making a class zine (/ziːn/) is about knowledge-sharing. It is a tool for empowerment, harnessing students' skills and experiences to teach others new things (Austerity Alters & Inspire Women Oldham 2023: 3).

Zine-methodologies have been successfully implemented as a form of **qualitative analysis** (cf. Biagioli, Pässilä & Owens 2021), and as a **tool of feminist and critical pedagogy** (cf. Creasap 2014, Scheper 2023)

The seminar **A Linguistics of the Oppressed** was designed with the idea of adapting a zine-methodology inspired by Wooten's (2020) conceptualizations of ⎘ **COPY**, ✂ **CUT** & ⎗ **PASTE** in the field of library and information science to the field of linguistics.

⎘ **COPY** Ideas, theories, practices that will inform or enhance your work.
✂ **CUT** Structural and personal frameworks. What you need from what you don't need.
⎗ **PASTE** Things that strengthen, connect and sustain you, the whole group and (y)our research.

GOALS OF THE CLASS ZINE

✊ Uncovering the role of language in relationships of power and oppression.

👥 Centering linguistic discourse around oppressed communities.

🔓 Promoting critical thinking and "*conscientização*" (Freire 1970:19).

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AAVE - Respect, Identity, and Cultural Appropriation
The Linguistics of Protests

The Power of Words
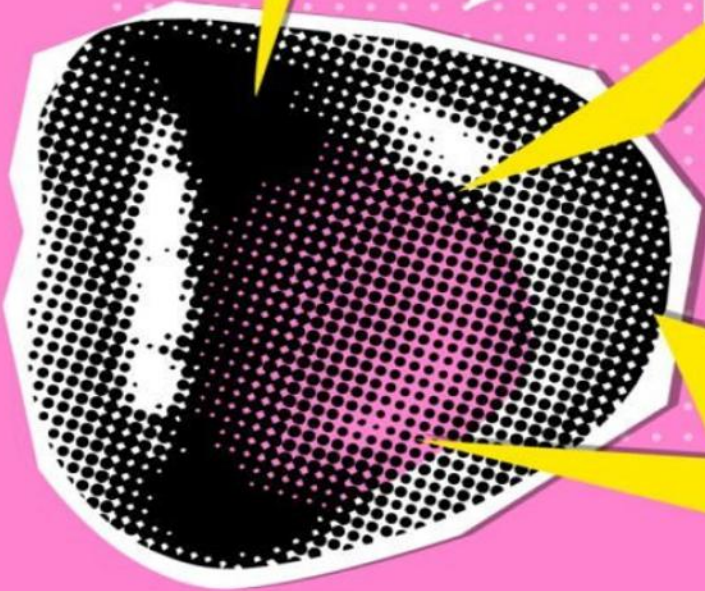
African American Vernacular English

AAVE has roots in various African languages and regional dialects brought to the United States during the transatlantic slave trade. It developed as a distinct form of English spoken by African Americans. It evolved from Creole African languages spoken by the slaves in their interactions between different African ethnic groups, European colonisers, and Native Americans (Rickford 1999; Bucholtz, Mary and Kira Hall 2016). Because the slaves from the various parts of Africa needed a means to communicate among themselves, the indigenes of the land, and their masters.

(Library of Congress in Parry 2019)

For many Black individuals, AAVE is more than a way of speaking—it expresses cultural pride and solidarity. It serves as a marker of identity and community, encapsulating African Americans' shared experiences, struggles, and triumphs. Using AAVE fosters a sense of belonging and connection among Black people, reinforcing their collective identity and cultural legacy.

Features of AAVE

Phonological Variations	Example
Cluster Reduction with /θr/	"Thow" for "Throw"
Final Consonant Deletion	"Lan" for "Land"
/n/ and /in/ Alteration	"Singin'" for "Singing"
/t/ as /k/ within a /str/ Cluster	"Skreet" for "Street"
Unstressed Syllable Deletion	"Bout" for "About"

Grammatical Variations	Example
"Ain't" as an Auxiliary	"He ain't coming", for "He isn't coming"
Copula "Be"	"He be running all the time," for "He runs all of the time"
Double Negatives	"Ain't nobody got time for that!"
Use of Adverb "There"	"It ain't no class today."
Unmarked Third Person Singular Verbs	"She stare too much" for "She stares too much"

(McClellan 2014)

The Controversy

The increasing use of AAVE by non-Black individuals has sparked a heated debate. Many Black people perceive this as cultural appropriation, as non-Black individuals adopt elements of their culture without proper understanding or respect. Non-Black individuals compound this issue when they use AAVE for social or commercial gain without acknowledging its origins or the systemic disadvantages faced by its native speakers.

Cultural Appropriation vs. Appreciation: While some argue that using AAVE is a sign of artistic appreciation, others contend that it often amounts to appropriation, stripping the dialect of its context and significance.

Power Dynamics: Non-Black individuals perpetuate power imbalances by using AAVE, as society stigmatises the dialect when spoken by Black people but celebrates it when used by others.

Authenticity and Respect: Many Black individuals feel that the use of AAVE by non-Black people lacks authenticity and fails to respect the cultural and historical weight associated with the dialect.

(Rickford 1999: 75-90)

To address these controversies, below are some suggestions for non-Black individuals who are interested in using AAVE:

Education: Learn about the history and significance of AAVE.
Recognition: Acknowledge the contributions of Black culture.
Respect Boundaries: Be mindful of the power dynamics and implications while using AAVE.

Conclusion

AAVE is a powerful expression of Black people's identity and culture. The controversy surrounding its use by non-Black individuals highlights the importance of respecting and valuing the cultural heritage of marginalised communities. Through understanding and dialogue, we can navigate these complex issues with sensitivity and respect. Because language is part of every society's identity and even though language can be fluid, it is important to respect its origin and honour its cultural roots.

The Linguistics of Protest

C.H.

Language is more than a means of communication; it is a powerful tool for shaping perceptions, articulating demands, and fostering solidarity.

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) and Me Too movements exemplify how linguistic strategies, including slogans, chants, and hashtags, have played pivotal roles in mobilizing support and challenging systemic injustices.

Black Lives Matter: Voices Against Systemic Racism

The Black Lives Matter movement was founded in 2013 in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, an unarmed Black teenager. The movement aims to address and challenge systemic racism, police brutality, and broader social and economic injustices faced by Black communities (Hillstrom 2018).

Slogans like "Black Lives Matter" and "I Can't Breathe" succinctly convey the movement's core messages, making them easily understandable and memorable.

Articulation of Demands: Slogans rooted in specific incidents ground the movement's messages in real, relatable events.

Unification of Participants: Chants like "No justice, no peace" foster a sense of community and solidarity, reinforcing a collective identity and shared purpose.

Creation of Identity: Phrases like "Hands up, don't shoot" have become symbolic of BLM, encapsulating its resistance to police violence and demand for justice.

Me Too: Empowering Through Shared Narratives

The Me Too movement was initiated by activist Tarana Burke in 2006 to help survivors of sexual violence, particularly women of colour from low-income communities, find pathways to healing. The movement gained widespread recognition in 2017 when actress Alyssa Milano used the hashtag #MeToo following the Harvey Weinstein sexual abuse allegations, sparking a global conversation about sexual harassment and assault (Hillstrom 2019).

Spreading Awareness: Hashtags like #MeToo provide a platform for survivors to share their stories, raising awareness about the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault.

Mobilizing Global Support: The hashtag's viral nature creates a global network of support and advocacy, transcending geographical boundaries.

Empowerment through Personal Narratives: Sharing personal stories under #MeToo breaks the silence and stigma surrounding sexual harassment and assault, fostering empathy and solidarity.

Challenging Societal Norms: The movement has prompted discussions about consent, power dynamics, and the need for systemic change, leading to increased accountability for perpetrators and policy changes in workplaces.

Finding voices within the space of a transient LL of protest (Monje 2017)

Language central to identity, unity and effectiveness of protests

The power of language in these movements is deeply striking and the profound impacts of all the linguistic strategies mentioned above, underscores the need to view language as an active agent in social change, rather than a passive medium of communication. It is evident that language can reflect and shape societal values, acting as a conduit for both oppression and liberation.

Understanding the linguistic dimensions of these movements highlights the universality of certain forms of oppression and the interconnectedness of global struggles for justice. This recognition calls for a more nuanced approach to studying language, one that considers its socio-political contexts and its potential for driving change. In this light, the analysis of protest linguistics is not just an academic exercise but a crucial component in the broader fight for equality and human rights.

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Conserving Oppressed Voices

- Endangered Native American Languages
- This is my life or *esta es mi vida*
- The Battle to Preserve Aboriginal Languages in Australia
- Translations - Colonizing without War
- English and Arabic in Dubai
- The Importance of Storytelling for Native American Languages and Cultures

Endangered Native American Languages

F.F.

Have you ever heard of the Eyak language? Eyak is an endangered Native American language once spoken by the Eyak people of Alaska, known for its phonological complexity and unique linguistic features. Despite efforts to preserve it, Eyak is now critically endangered with the passing of its last fluent speaker, Marie Smith Jones, in 2008, signaling the urgent need for the ongoing revitalization efforts (*Endangered Languages Project - search* 2024). But the Eyak language is only one of hundreds of critically endangered Native American languages that are on the brink of extinction. It is therefore important to address this issue and think about solutions. This essay explores the current status of endangered Native American languages, the historical and socio-economic causes of their decline and the efforts and challenges involved in their revitalization.

Native American languages are in a critical state. Before the first Europeans arrived in America, there were more than 300 Native American languages in North America. However, because of various reasons, in the early 21st century there are only 150 native languages left which are still spoken in North America, 112 in the U.S. and 60 in Canada, with most of these language being endagered (Encyclopedia Britannica 2024b). While some languages, such as Navajo with around 170,000 speakers, are still relatively strong, others have very few or no speakers left at all as is the case for the Eyak language (Denetclaw 2017).

One main reason for this language decline was colonization. It is estimated that within 200 years of the arrival of the first Europeans in America, more than 90 % of the indigenous population died from the diseases introduced by animals and humans from Europe. As a result, much of the culture and language of the indigenous peoples was lost (Crystal 2002). In addition, several languages have been endangered by government policies, for instance The Indian Removal Act and English-only education policies. The Indian Removal Act was a crucial piece of legislation, that authorized the forcible relocation of Native American tribes from their ancestral lands in the southeastern United States to territories west of the Mississippi River. In this so called "Trail of

Tears" lots of Native Americans died and their social structures necessary for the transmission of their languages were destroyed (*Indian Removal Act* 2024).

Furthermore, there were several English-only education policies from the late 19th to the mid-20th century, where children weren't allowed to speak their native language in schools. They were threatened with hard punishments if they spoke their native language, which created a climate of fear that further restricted the use of indigenous languages (Encyclopedia Britannica 2024a). And also, socio-economic pressures led to the marginalization of native communities, through to the systematic exclusion of Native American communities from mainstream economic opportunities like education, infrastructure, or employment. To survive economically, find work, and have opportunities for advancement, they had to migrate to urban English-speaking communities, learn the English language and neglect their mother tongue (Crystal 2002).

Despite these challenges, there are successful efforts to revitalize endangered Native American languages. First, the speakers of a Native language need to increase their prestige within the dominant community. People must start to notice the endangered community within the wider community. This can be achieved through access to media, regular community activities or social activities. Second, the endangered community needs an economic boost that increases self-esteem and provides the necessary resources to raise the profile of the language. One way of increasing economic growth would be the tourism industry. Third, its speakers need to increase their legitimate power in the eyes of the dominant community, for example by government policies. Therefore, ongoing pressure on governments is essential. Fourth, the endangered language must be promoted in schools and education for instance by the introduction of bilingual education. Fifth, to preserve a language for future generations, it needs to be written down, so that texts can be given from generation to generation. And last of all, an endangered language will progress if its speakers can make use of electronic technology (Crystal 2002).

In conclusion, the survival of Native American languages is crucial for preserving cultural diversity and heritage. While the challenges are significant, the revitalization initiatives demonstrate that with community involvement, political support, and innovative use of technology, it is possible to sustain and secure these languages.

This is my life or *esta es mi vida*? The bilingual choices of Latin American music artists

Brianna Irizarry

With 1.5 billion and 500 million speakers, respectively, English and Spanish are two of the most commonly spoken languages in the world (Crystal 2009; Ardila 2020: 41). Despite their massive global presences, these two languages are not necessarily equals; value in terms of emotional affectivity, prestige, and monetary capital is allotted to them to differing degrees by their speakers and "observers." This zine explores how the linguistic choices of bilingual music artists from Spanish-speaking Latin America reflect the aforementioned discrepancies in these various domains of power.

"Don't you see baby, *así es perfecto*" (Ripoll et al. 2005: 39): **"like that is perfect"**

In this excerpt of "Hips don't lie," Shakira Isabel Mebarak Ripoll is breaking the third wall, directly speaking to her audience. Further, the comment itself refers to the way she moves her hips. Her assuming the role as a teacher or judge of dancing indicates a high level of confidence in her ability to dance. This indicates that this line is an emotionally loaded statement, which is also reaffirmed by Ripoll's switching to Spanish from the song's main language: English. The language switch signals to the audience that this statement bears stronger emotional weight. Ripoll's choosing Spanish to express emotional weight is reflective of the choices and attitudes of bilinguals of English and Spanish, who have been proven to prefer the latter language for emotionally charged situations, as it is perceived to have higher emotional affectivity, or "emotionality" (Guttfreund 1990; Sebanc et al. 2009). This proved to be true even for those who had Spanish as an L2 (Guttfreund 1990: 606).

"Funny how a lonely day, can make a person say:

What good is my life…

Funny how I often seem, to think I'll find never another a dream

In my life…

This is my life

Today, tomorrow love will come and find me" (Raymond et al. 1977: 1-10).

This excerpt is from the song "This is my life," performed by Cuban singer Lupe Victoria Yolí Raymond, known as simply "La Lupe." When Raymond decided to sing solely in English as opposed to her native Spanish in the mid-

1970s, many Latinos interpreted her move as a betrayal of her Latina roots (Moreno-Velázquez 2003: 149). This conveys the significance of Spanish for the Latino identity, especially abroad (García et al. 1988). This is a misguided criticism, for the song's main theme is about being proud of what one has accomplished, despite the hardship they have faced. As a group that faces many challenges in the United States, being more likely to experience poverty (Scherer & García 2022) and lengthier prison sentences (Morín 2009), Latinos should have much to appreciate about this song. Nonetheless, Raymond' was motivated to produce more in English due to language's monetary capital (Moreno-Velázquez 2003: 149), and she was not off the mark here. Although frequently the language of the oppressor (at least in the American context), English has immense commercial weight, with proficiency in the language helping people obtain competitive, lucrative positions in many countries (Zainuddin et al. 2019; It-ngam et al. 2023). More still, a country's English proficiency has proven to be correlated to its Gross Domesitc Product (Zhou & Wang 2017; Education First 2020).

"*No me digas beaner, Mr. Puñetero (*don't call me beaner Mr. Annoying)

*Te sacaré un susto por racista y culero (*Because I will scare you for being racist and an asshole)

*No me llames frijolero (*don't call me beaner)

Pinche gringo puñetero (fucking annoying gringo)*"* (Ayala et al. 2003: 20-23).

In their song "Frijolero," Mexican band Molotov addresses racism against Latinos in the United States, a very real issue, with Spanish and its speakers being increasingly seen as threat to cultural identity in the United States (Criag and Richeson 2014; Hopkins et al. 2014). However, apart from mere lyrics, Molotov stylistically conveys racism as well. This part of the song is performed using Mock Spanish, or Spanish-inspired phrases many white people in the USA sprinkle into their English (Hill 2001). These little phrases, such as "buenos nachos" instead of *buenas noches,* or "hasta la vista" purposefully disobey the grammatical and phonological rules of the Spanish language. The lack of respect for the correct use of Spanish suggest many things about the perception of the Spanish language and its speakers. The more obvious of these is that Spanish does not have enough capital to need to be respected. The other is that Spanish speakers are not diligent or intelligent enough to recognize that their language is being used incorrectly (Hill 2001). This is a stark contrast to the prestige English has globally. Through their use of Mock Spanish, Molotov is ridiculing the group in power (in this case, white people in the United States), making *them* appear to be the unintelligent ones, for they use Mock Spanish with the notion that Spanish-speakers will either not notice or care, when it is in fact the opposite.

TRANSLATIONS
Colonizing
without War

By Nicolas Behrend

Important Facts:

What: A drama by Irish playwright Brian Friel
When: Written in 1980
What about: Describes the end of traditional Gaelic culture in Ireland

Content:

Set in the year 1833 in the town Baile Baeg, County Donegal, the inhabitants are confronted with British soldier Yolland and his comrades. They are tasked by England to create a 6-inch map of Ireland; Yolland's specific task being the translation of Irish place names into English (Friel 1980).

So what?

The British colonized Ireland in "Translations" in two nonviolent ways which effectively commenced the decline of Irish culture.
By illegalizing hedge schools and unifying education in a national school system they take control over knowledge and, thus, also the proliferation of the Irish way of living. Hedge schools were schools created for peasant children and led to a notably high standard of education (Richtarik 2002). This is echoed in the play when British Captain Lancey is unable to differentiate between Latin taught at the school and Irish, when he first arrives to inform the denizens about the map (Friel 1996). This proves that British education, unfortunately, will not only force British values over Irish ones but also is lacking quality in comparison.

The second description of colonization is through the renaming of Irish places into English, which in the play, as in reality, eroded the Irish mother tongue. The story is set in Baile Baeg, literally translated *Baile* means town and *Baeg* small, however, Yolland decides to name it *Ballybag*. Clearly, he is not aware or does not care enough about the real meanings the natives of the land gave their places. Another example is the renaming of the river Bun na hAbhann to Burnfoot, utterly ignoring the fact that it should be translated into "The bottom of the river". As the play progresses English settles like a layer of sediment upon the old language culture of Baile Baeg (Richtarik 2002). This is reflected in Ireland today as many are still unable to speak their own language.

A part of the map created in 1836

Wait, what? Ireland was colonized?

"Ireland, Britain's oldest colony, is often considered inappropriate to the postcolonial grouping, partly because it lies just off Europe. Yet Ireland's centuries-old political and economic oppression at the hands of the British – and its resistance to such control – fits well within the postcolonial paradigm" (Roche 2014: 130)

Reception:

When the play released it was a huge success, with people in awe of the political message, and it became a standard part of the Dublin Abbey Theatre repertoire.
A production from 2007 in New York sparked complaints about the Irish accent being unintelligible which also shows the still prevalent non-acceptance of non-standard Englishes (Roche 2014).

English & Arabic language in Dubai

F.K.

Facts:

- ONLY official language: Arabic (Al-Issa 2022: 120)-> **H-variety** (prestige, high language)-> Modern Standard Arabic used for formal& written contexts
- former British protectorate (Siemund 2023: 211)
- 200 nationalities, more than 150 ethnicities (Randall&Samimi 2020: 43)
- most immigrants have a **temporary** residence status

Focus of Research:

1) The increasing importance of **English i**n Dubai
2) Remaining importance of **Arabic** in Dubai

Historical Framework: (Theodoroupulou 2022: 63)

- 19th century: Dubai as a trading center, trading port –> **language contact->** influence on Arabic language
- 1966: Discovery of oil in the UAE (United Arabian Emirates)
- 1970: oil crisis-< rise of English language teaching to diversify its economy
- Past 50 years: rapid population growth (e.g. Southeast Asians working in the service sector)
- International labour force(majority Indians and Southeast Asians)-> **'Superdiversity'->** less than 10% of the population have Emirati roots -> urgency: common **lingua franca**

Status of English and Arabic in Dubai:

ENGLISH	ARABIC
Powerful tool to facilitate modernization	Linked with cultural identity
In the domains of business and academia ->" *Prerequisite of success*" (Ahmed 2022: 189)-> tool for economy	Religious ties-> Arabic language is linked with Islamic identity
Associated with prestige	Associated with culture, history, tradition and authenticity
"*English is currently the preferred language of Dubai but it is not used as a monolingual English but one entangled with other languages in complex ways*." (Al-Issa 2022: 119)	Trading practices of Dubai led to a pidginization of **Arabic** -> many borrowings from Hindi, Urdu, Farsi, Malayalam Emirati Arabic: less prestigious (due to Persian, Baluchi and Urdu elements) (Randall&Samimi 2010: 43)

(Theodoropoulou 2022: 73)

Education:

SCHOOL: Theodoropoulou 2022: 73
Preference for private English schools by non-native English speakers and immigrants

UNIVERSITY/tertiary education:
Assessment exams (e.g. TOEFL) to enter tertiary education (Ahmed 2022: 189)
English is the instruction language at UAE University, the largest national university
➔ POSITIVE attitude towards English
• Reason: the arrival of English speakers -> brought wealth and **improved standard of living** for Indigenous people

KEY concepts/terms: Theodoropoulou 2022: 63

• **Emiratisation**: employment of Emirati workers in the job sector **Free Zones:** establishment of FZ -> companies are free to choose employees from any nationality (for 50 years, Israelis excluded), normally **Emiratisation!**
• Kachru's model of '**World Englishes**': Dubai is at the Outer Circle/Extended Circle because it's a non-native English city

Example: Theodoropoulou 2022:71

• Burj Khalifa: shopping mall: English advertisement in Arabic letters- > English content -> "Arabish"/"Arabizi": mixing of English and Arabic words

Conclusion:

In Dubai, as one of the multilingual **global** cities (as Singapore or Hong Kong), the contribution of language contact led to the emergence of a so-called '**World English**'. English is the common lingua franca as there is a need to communicate between several nationalities.
Thus, it is unusual that Arabic remains the official language which is used in formal contexts, such as governmental issues. There is no **bilingualism**, which means that the English & Arabic languages are not competing, as English is the dominant and more powerful language in Dubai. English became so important due to economic factors, international labour force and the financial improvement. However, Arabic as the only official language is preserved due to cultural reasons as it is also the language of the Holy Qur'an, while English is the more powerful language in everyday communication.

The Importance of Storytelling for Native American Languages and Cultures

Melanie Späth

Cordero (ca. 1980)

What is storytelling?

*"Storytelling is the **interactive** art of **using words** and actions to **reveal** the elements and images of **a story** while encouraging the **listeners's imagination."** (National Storytelling Network 2017)

➤ Different cultures tell stories differently.

Why is Storytelling important for Native American Cultures?

Native American cultures rely heavily on storytelling as a way to maintain their **history**, **customs**, **ceremonies**, and **cultural beliefs**. The elders of the tribe usually pass on these stories across several generations. They act as the "**source of historical knowledge**" (National Museum of the American Indian), fostering connections not only within individual native communities but also facilitating tribal bonds. Stories also serve as a means of imparting **valuable life lessons** and teaching Native Americans how to live in the wild (All Good Tales 2018).
Creation stories are considered sacred and are only transmitted orally (National Museum of the American Indian). They explain the beginning of life, the universe, and natural events. One important theme in storytelling, commonly shared among different Native American civilizations, is the theme of *"hounouring all life"* (All Good Tales 2018), which instructs them to live in harmony with each other and nature as well as to venerate their ancestors.

How can Storytelling be used as a form of decolonisation?

During the European colonisation of North America, when Native Americans were forcefully relocated, they used storytelling to **remain connected** to each other and their homeland (All Good Tales 2018). Nowadays, storytelling can be used to understand the reality of colonialism **from the perspective of the oppressed**. It shifts the focus from dominant western colonial views to the experiences of Native Americans. Storytelling as a form of decolonisation can be regarded as "**participatory research**" (Samuel & Drexler 2021: 5), since it provides a medium through which everyone can share their story. Thus, it gives insight into the **diverse** and **different encounters** of Native Americans with European settlers (Samuel & Drexler 2021: 3-5).
Furthermore, storytelling can be beneficial in coping with trauma. According to Visser (2015: 257), there is a "*strong need for narratives to come to terms with [...] colonial wounding.*"
As a result, using storytelling to process traumatic memories can *aid in healing* while bringing injustices to light and *increasing awareness*.

How can Storytelling be used to keep Native American Languages and Cultures alive?

Many **Native American languages** have **weakened** or **disappeared** completely, due to the deliberate eradication of Native American communities. Consequently, storytelling is less common today, and while there has been some Native American speech in written form, it is crucial to **incorporate storytelling** traditions in the classroom, specifically in **language learning**. Considering its vast and diverse topics and the vital role it plays in Native American oral tradition, storytelling is a helpful tool for reviving Native American culture. Exposing students to Native American stories is also beneficial because it **boosts** their **creativity**, **memory**, and **listening** skills (National Museum of the American Indian).

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Linguistic Dimensions of Gender and Sexuality

- Gender-Inclusive Language

- The Evolution of Gendered Titles and Honorifics: Reflecting Changing Gender Norms

- Language and Gender in the Classroom

- Feminine Discourse and its Impact on Women's Self-Image

- Incels: The Phenomenon of The Involuntary Celibate

- The Linguistic Degendering of Marginalized People

- Queer Linguistics: The Power of Language in the LGBTQ+ and Drag Community

Why is Gender-inclusive Laguage necessary?
P.F.

- **Equality**: Ensures everyone is treated respectfully.
- **Inclusivity**: Embraces all gender identities.
- **Avoids Stereotypes**: Prevents reinforcing gender roles.
- **Mental Health**: Promotes well-being by acknowledging identities.
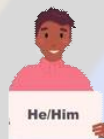- **Awareness:** Fosters understanding and acceptance.

Studies
- Use of generic masculine terms is more associated with men (Salsabila 2024).

Common Issues Across Languages:
- Generic masculine use
- Pronouns
- Professional titles

He/Him   She/Her   They/Them   Ze/Hir

Tips
- If unsure, just ask about pronouns.
- You don't always see which pronouns a person uses

How to Use Gender-inclusive Laguage

- "You guys" → "Everyone", "Folks"
- "He" or "His" → Plural forms
- Use "they" for singular generic references
- Gender-neutral job titles: "Fireman" → "Firefighter"

- **Pronouns**
    - **Standard Pronouns**: He, she, it
    - **Neopronouns**: Ze/hir, xe/xem, fea/faer, ey/em

Pronoun	Example	Function
They/Them	They are going to the store	Refers to a singular person who does not identify as exclusively male or female
Xe/Xem	Xe is an artist and xem work is amazing	

Non-binary pronouns are used to refer to individuals who do not identify exclusively male or female

Acceptance of Non-Binary or Neopronouns:
- Challenges held beliefs about identity and language
- Issues include unfamiliarity, grammatical concerns, and traditional norms (Tovar 2023)

-> **Language shapes social constructions about gender.**

E.N.

The Evolution of Gendered Titles and Honorifics: Reflecting Changing Gender Norms

"Our use of language embodies attitudes as well as referential meanings. Words, and their use, reflect social attitudes."
– Robin Lakoff, *Language and Woman's Place*.

Mr.: Derived from "Master," used for men regardless of marital status, indicating authority and status.

Mrs.: Abbreviation of "Mistress," historically used for married women and women of higher social standing.

Miss: Used for unmarried women, linking a woman's identity to her marital status.
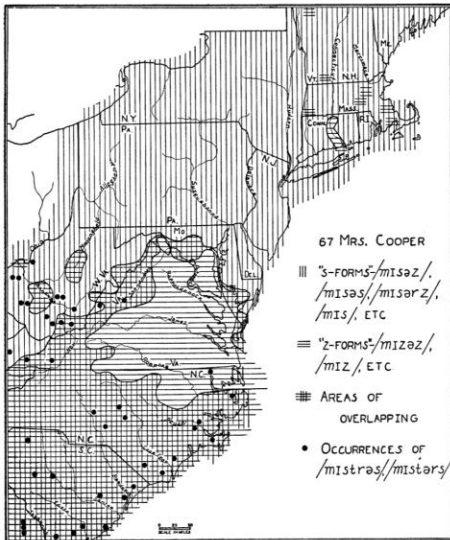
Ms.: Emerged in the 20th century during the feminist movement to provide a neutral term that does not specify marital status, recognizing women's professional and personal autonomy.

Mx.: Introduced in the 1970s as a gender-neutral honorific, gaining popularity within LGBTQ+ communities, used for non-binary and gender non-conforming individuals.

Inclusive titles like Mx. provide recognition and validation for non-binary and gender non-conforming individuals.

The transition of "Mrs." to indicate a married woman only became prominent in the 19th century, coinciding with broader social changes and the influence of literature and societal norms.

67 Mrs. Cooper
||| "s-forms" /mɪsəz/,
/mɪsəs/ /mɪsərz/,
/mɪs/, etc

≡ "z-forms" /mɪzəz/,
/mɪz/, etc

⊞ Areas of
overlapping

• Occurrences of
/mɪstrəs/ /mɪstərs/

Resistance to Change:
- Significant resistance in conservative contexts to adopting inclusive language.
- Continuous education and awareness efforts are essential.

Continued Advocacy and Research:
- It's crucial to keep advocating for inclusive language and conducting research to understand its impact.

"Mrs. was the exact equivalent of Mr. Either term described a person who governed servants or apprentices, in Johnson's terms – we might say a person with capital." - Amy Louise Erickson.

Language and Gender in the Classroom

S.N.

Who do you think of when you hear 'chair**man**', 'police**man**' or 'fire**man**'? You probably have a **man** in mind, right? This is one of many everyday life examples that show how language influences our thinking. Stereotypes are often created and maintained through language without us even realizing it (Elsen 2018). The adoption of gender stereotypes as part of the socialization process begins with young children at around 12 months and continues throughout the lifespan, with appropriation occurring particularly in preschool and primary school (Fruehwirth, Heilemann & Stoeger 2024). Therefore, schools and teachers build and shape students' thoughts through linguistic practices that underly societal norms, influencing children's abilities to learn and therefore their chances in life. The data provided on this topic focuses mainly on binary gender roles as there unfortunately are almost no studies concerning non-binary gender roles in classrooms, even though the most current, but also most controversial issue concerning language, gender and sexuality is gender neutral language. The generic masculine perpetuates the invisibility of women and often carries negative connotations for feminine derivatives (Elsen 2018). In English language teaching, there seems to be a slow but steady trend towards decreasing the use of generic pronouns. The singular 'they' instead of 'he'/'she' or 'him'/'her' is suggested to avoid linguistic sexism and include the LGBTQ+ community (Kocaman & Selvi 2021).

Instructional materials in the language classrooms reflect this bias, with male characters dominating dialogues, thus providing more practice for male students as those characters are mainly read by boys (Sunderland 2000). Concerning lexicology, researchers report that the male pronouns and nouns are used first in cases of pairing, so 'he/she' is rather said than 'she/he'. Other aspects include the use of generic constructs, such as 'mankind' and linguistically feminized words like 'hostess' or 'Mrs.' that often carry diminutive connotations and marginalize women's identities in both language and society (Kocaman & Selvi 2021).

In terms of written school material, the representation of gender in textbooks is pivotal in shaping the language learning and teaching process as they are the main materials used. Corpus linguistics research examining the use of adjectives shows

that male characters are more frequently portrayed than female characters. Men are also described with 73 different adjectives and women with only 50, whereby those adjectives for women are used to portray their body, while those for men are much more widely spread (Elsen 2018).

Women are depicted in subordinate roles, lower paying jobs, and emphasizing emotional and appearance-related character traits. In opposition to that, men are portrayed in authoritative roles, higher paying jobs, and as having many hobbies (Kocaman & Selvi 2021). This biased representation not only perpetuates outdated gender norms but also makes female students feel less visible. Diverse depictions have an impact on the level of achievement for different learners. Good, Woodzicka and Wingfield (2010) found that female US high school students achieved higher levels of science comprehension after viewing pictures of female scientists as compared to pictures of male scientists. This proves that representation matters.

A study by Spender (1982) shows her own treatment of gender in the classroom: the maximum time she spent interacting with girls was 42% and the minimum time she talked to boys was 58%, also showing that girls receive less of the teacher's attention in class. Furthermore, the study of Barbara Hruska in 2004 showed that boys dominate discussions, leading to higher participation and reinforcing their sense of superiority. The boys' discourse was more competitive than the girls', marginalizing girls, reducing their self-esteem and leadership opportunities. (Hruska, 2004).

As important as textbook material is the representation in the spoken language. By choosing their words carefully, teachers have a great impact on representation. This table by Kocaman and Selvi (2021) suggests practical usage of inclusive language for teachers:

Principles	Practices	
	Instead of this...	Consider using this...
Whenever possible, use gender-neutral words when making generic references instead of stereotypes, false generics, man-compounds, feminine suffixes	Man, mankind	People, humanity, human beings
	Steward, stewardess	Flight attendant
	Guys (men and women)	All
	Female doctor, male nurse	Doctor, nurse, healthcare professional
	Miss, Mrs.	Ms.
	Mr. and Mrs. Smith	Jane and John Smith
	Girlfriend/husband	Partner / significant other
Whenever possible, use plural forms to omit the masculine reference words	**An employee** knows that **he** should keep **his** ID badge with **him** at all times.	**Employees** should keep their ID badges with **them** at all times.
Whenever possible, use they/their to refer back to singular nouns ("Singular they")	**Each participant** must present **his** ID badge.	**Each participant** must present **their** ID badge.
Use slashes [/] judiciously when writing both forms of words		Keeping an ID badge creates a heavy burden on her/him.

In conclusion, critical language teaching encourages educators to challenge gender stereotypes and biases in the classroom by promoting inclusive practices and critically evaluating educational materials and classroom dynamics. They can create an environment that is free from gender biases and supports the academic and personal development of **all** students.

Feminine Discourse and its Impact on Women's Self-Image
C.L.

Simone de Beauvoir observed, "It is through the eyes of men that women first look at themselves; they see themselves not directly but as if reflected in a mirror. This is true of all human consciousness, but for woman the mirror is magnifying, deforming, and it makes her conscious of her own defects more acutely." (2015: 136). This captures the reality many women experience daily, seeing themselves through a distorted lens shaped by male-dominated perceptions, often feeling more aware of their flaws than their strengths. But how has this way of perceiving women emerged?

Judith Butler's idea of "performing gender" resonates deeply with this experience. She suggests that gender is not a fixed trait but something we continuously act out (2006). These repeated behaviours begin to feel natural over time and become a part of our self-concept. Due to women historically being seen as the weaker gender, they were excluded from the conversation for centuries (Hohendorf & Daniele 2014). Therefore, most of our stereotypes, norms and ideals were shaped by men.

Another influential aspect is mass media. Its stereotypical images of women reinforce societal expectations about femininity. Think about how often we see the same narrow definitions of beauty in movies, advertisements, and social media. This constant exposure to idealised versions of women can create a painful disconnection between how women see themselves and how they think they should look. The so-called 'self-schema theory' explains that women judge their appearance against three references: the socially represented ideal body, the objective body, and the internalised ideal body (Sakar 2014).

As we can see, feminist theory reveals that gender is not an inherent trait but a set of behaviours we internalise through repetition. As Beauvoir explained, 'One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman' (2015: 289). Therefore, the only way we can truly reach gender equality is by changing our behaviour at the root: in the way we think and talk. Thus, future generations can develop different thought patterns and adjust their actions accordingly.

Incels: The Phenomenon of The Involuntary Celibate

by Niklas Rackl

"Celibacy marks the priest as a man consecrated to the service of Christ and the Church." (North Carolina Priest n.d.). Men of God in the Roman Catholic Church took the vow and promised not to marry or have sex. It is their choice. However, there are people who did not take this vow yet still live a celibate life. These individuals, often referred to as 'incels' (involuntary celibates), do not choose celibacy willingly but rather find themselves unable to establish romantic or sexual relationships despite their desires. This lack of human intimacy might lead to the projection of one's own misery onto other people through speech. The language used by the incel community reflects their social isolation and misogynistic attitudes.

In order to analyse their language, we need to understand sociolinguistic theories. Sociolinguistic theory explores the relationship between language and society, emphasizing that language both shapes and is shaped by reality. It reflects societal structures and influences the formation of values, attitudes, and social groups. In the context of incels, their language reflects and shapes their reality, demonstrating linguistic variation through sociolects and language communities (Axelsson & Lindgren 2021).

To research their sociolect, language communities and language reflecting societal structures, I visited the primary incel forum (http://incel.is) to observe their discourse, including discussions about women and interactions among themselves.

A sociolect is a language variety associated with a particular social group, reflecting shared experiences, values, and identities of its members. (Chambers & Trudgill 1998)

The incel community has developed a unique sociolect, characterized by terms like "Stacys," "Chads," "femoids," and "hypergamy."

For example, Stacys, in incel terms, represent idealized women at the top of the social and sexual hierarchy, who have abundant romantic and sexual options, typically favoring relationships with Chads (their apex counterparts). Incels harbor resentment towards Stacys, often targeting them with online abuse, humiliation, and even physical violence due to perceived exclusivity and their role in the incels' romantic frustrations.

(moonshot n.d.). Dehumanising words such as "femoids" (female-like) or "roasties" (sexually active women) can be found all over the forum. "Stacy" represents an idealized woman who is out of reach for incels, reinforcing their feelings of exclusion. "Femoids" dehumanizes women, reflecting the community's misogyny.

A language community is a group of people who share linguistic norms and practices, which help reinforce social bonds and group identity (Meyerhoff 2011).

Incels form a distinct language community through online forums and social media platforms, where they use their specific sociolect to communicate their collective identity and ideologies.

One forum thread is called "Holy shit chad posts 1 minute videa of his face staring at camera and get half a mill views. Every girl is thirsting in comment section." (Reddit_is_for_cucks, 2019). Most comments emphasize the perceived injustice faced by incels compared to "Chads," reflecting a broader belief that life is inherently unfair, the others simply insult women. Forums like incel.is serve as hubs where members use their unique terminology, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual understanding. This language reinforces their collective identity and perpetuates their shared misogynistic beliefs.

Language reflects social hierarchies, power dynamics, and cultural values, indicating social position and group affiliations (Milroy & Milroy 1999).

The incel sociolect shapes their reality by reinforcing their feelings of isolation. Constantly referring to themselves as "involuntary celibates" perpetuates their identity as marginalised individuals because the term itself reinforces a sense of victimhood, shaping how incels perceive their social status. It seems like the use of misogynistic language shapes the community's reality by normalizing their negative attitudes and behaviors towards women. This cyclical reinforcement strengthens their misogynistic beliefs and ideologies. The omnipresent use of derogatory terms like "roasties" to describe women reflects hatred towards women, shaping the community's collective mindset and justifying their misogyny.

By examining these sociolinguistic concepts, we can understand how the language used by the incel community both reflects and reinforces their social isolation and misogynistic attitudes. Their sociolect, formed within their language community, not only expresses their shared experiences and ideologies but also shapes their perceptions and interactions, perpetuating their subcultural identity and harmful beliefs.

THE LINGUISTIC DEGENDERING OF MARGINALIZED PEOPLE
H.L

The body – and its embodied social categories like race, gender, sexuality, and disability – is an important field of enquiry for linguistics, as "the body is shaped and reshaped by the linguistic systems available and the language ideologies that inform them" (Buchholtz & Hall 2016: 182). Therefore, embodied social categories are not stable identities but rather dependent on cultural discourse – see how Foucault explores discourse as a knowledge-producing system (1972) – , informed by and discussed through language.

Over history, certain norms have been constructed in and through discourse, defining an ideal for each of the respective social categories, with those being – inter alia – White, male, straight, cis, Western, middle class and able-bodied. Not fitting one or multiple categories results in marginalization. (Buchholtz & Hall 2016: 175) However, these categories and norms are also not isolated from each other. For example, the Western discourse of gender has not only constructed a binary gender system that categorizes everyone either as a man or a woman, it is also deeply interconnected with the discourse of categories such as race and disability, defining the ideal of a man or a woman as also being White and able-bodied.

Not conforming to these ideals can lead to a process of othering – differentiating people as 'other' from the norm, which can also question their humanity (Bernasconi 2011: 151) – and consequently where non-White and disabled people are not able to meet normative gender expectations – that are established without their bodies in mind – they are othered as being neither a man nor a woman, and thus, in a binary gender system, as genderless.

'MAN' AND 'WOMAN' AS WHITE CATEGORIES

> "From the standpoint of an antiblack world, black men are nonmen-nonwomen, and black women are nonwomen-nonmen. This conclusion is based on our premiss of whites – white men and white women – being both human, being both Presence, and our premiss of blacks, both black men and women, being situated in the condition of the "hole," being both Absence." (Gordon 1995: 124)

→ As 'man' and 'woman' are defined around White ideals, Black people are not able to conform to these ideals and therefore seen as neither. This perceived 'absence' of gender leads to them being degendered.

'MAN' AND 'WOMAN' AS ABLE-BODIED CATEGORIES

Being viewed as genderless is a frequent experience for disabled people (Clare 2015: 124; Rapeane-Mathonsi, Adekunle & Mheta 2019: 2). Mohamed and Shefer state that gendered expectations for disabled people depend on the disability, how severe, as well as how visible it is, making "gendering […] conditional for disabled people" (2015: 5). Thus, being afforded or denied gendering can hinge on disability.

DISCLAIMER: While in recent decades, gender-neutral language has become more popular as a way to contest the patriarchal and gender-binary language ideologies, that is not the subject here. Rather, the discussion thematizes instances where individuals or specific groups, mainly based on their marginalization, are singled out to be denied gendered categories or to be degendered against their will or without their consent, whereas normative individuals are not.

HOW CAN PEOPLE BE VIEWED AS GENDERLESS WHEN THE GENDER BINARY VIEWS EVERYONE TO BE EITHER A MAN OR A WOMAN?

Attribution to the 'Opposite' Gender: Denying 'one' gender to people who do not 'conform' to can lead to them being attributed the 'opposite' gender. For example, within Western gender stereotypes, Black women are seen as 'too masculine' to be women, and thus are viewed as closer to men, whereas East-Asian men are seen as 'too feminine' to be men, and thus viewed as closer to women (discussed in Takinami 2016).

OR

Dehumanization: If, according to the gender binary, every human is either a man or a woman, denying an individual or group this categorization entails not viewing them as human at all.

HOW DOES DEGENDERING MANIFEST IN LANGUAGE BESIDES IN DISCOURSE?

THE PRONOUN 'IT' WHEN REFERRING TO HUMANS   (one manifestation)

In its historical language development, English has lost most of its grammaticalized gender, going from a lexical gender system – where, for example, nouns had grammatical gender – to a referential one, where mainly third-person singular pronouns express gender with a base in reality, differentiating if the referent is human or not, as well as if they are a man or woman (Dahl 2000). While the pronouns 'he' and 'she', with a distinction depending on gender, are mostly reserved for humans, 'it' is generally used for non-human creatures or objects, without gender distinction present. Because of this system, using the pronoun 'it' when referring to humans has detrimental implication, as Ohlson writes:

> "When the pronoun 'it' is used in a conversation in reference to a humans
> (possibly a representative of a stigmatized group or at least someone the
> speaker finds disgusting), the pragmatic effect is also very strong, so strong
> that it can, in fact, seem to question the humanity of the referent." (2022: 169)

On that account, referring to humans with the neuter pronoun 'it' is an act of dehumanization. Here, dehumanization also entails a denial of gender, as the gender differentiation is reserved to the pronouns 'he' and 'she'. Gender is therefore seen as a human category that non-human creatures, objects and groups you wish to dehumanize are not afforded.

EXAMPLES:

(1) Southern Slave codes:

> "The slave […] is a thing and not a man: **it** is an […]" (Ohlson 2022: 172)

→ The dehumanization of slaves – in this case of the United States specifically Black people – as 'things' is enacted in language by using the neuter pronoun 'it', semantically justifying slavery and the commodification of Black bodies.

(2) Personal experience of reddit user u/wcfreckles:

> "I'm intersex, trans, disabled, an SA survivor, and an indigenous person […] and it/its
> pronouns have been used against people of all of those groups (and me personally) as
> an attempt to remove our humanity and dignity from us." (2024)

→ For the redditor personally, it/its pronouns have negative connotations. It shows the "wounding potential" (Motschenbacher 2010: 169) of the pronoun 'it' for certain groups, which has a degendering dimension.

Queer Linguistics: The Power of Language in the LGBTQ+ and Drag Community

by Lauresha Dalipi

The Evolution and Impact of Modern Drag Culture

The modern drag scene emerged in the 1980s from drag balls organized by African-American, Latin, and trans communities in New York City, celebrating their culture and identity (Davis 2021: 8, 232-233). Drag culture has since evolved into a global, digital media venture (Brennan; Gudelunas 2023: 3). Increased media representation, e.g. through the world-famous TV show "RuPaul's Drag Race" (Dagget 2023: 199), has popularized the language and vocabulary of the drag and LGBTQ+ communities, embedding these cultural elements into the mainstream (Sarfati; Dos Santos 2023: 172).

Language As a Tool of Empowerment

Language holds significant importance in oppressed communities. Minorities use language to strengthen their position, reclaiming it as a form of resistance and fostering community and solidarity. Many terms that originated in the LGBTQ+ and Drag community were appropriated by the mainstream masses. It's important to acknowledge these terms were created by the Black and Latinx community as a form of survival as they faced systematic attacks for being queer and people of color. This language was made to supplement a marginalized community's self-worth and ideas (Davis 2021: 10).

Keep this in mind when you read the following words and realize that you have already integrated some of them into your own vocabulary.

Drag & Queer Lexicology

slay *YAS QUEEN*

Historical roots in providing safety, solidarity, and a sense of community	Terms which have gained mainstream usage through media representation
Blaqueer = empowering identifier for a Black queer person	**Fierce** = exceptional, powerful, intense
Chosen family = individuals not biologically or legally related who choose to support & nurture each other like family	**Reading sb** = to insult sb in a skillful way, piece of criticism, mocking observation
Friend of Dorothy = dated expression used to inconspicuously identify another gay or queer person	**Serving sth** = to display high levels of self-confidence, a fierce attitude or style
Judy = term to acknowledge a good friend, usually refers to a gay man	**Slay** = to impress or amuse
Lavender = purple color often used to represent the LGBTQ+ community → **Lavender Linguistics**	**Spilling the T(ea)** = to deliver news or gossip
Lavender Marriage = marriage between a man & a woman to conceal the sexual orientation of one or both partners	**Throwing shade** = to subtly insult or blatantly show contempt for → being **shady**
Mother = symbolic matriarch of a social group and/or respected mentor → **Mothering**	**Work/werk queen! You betta work/ werk queen!** = a complimentary exclamation of high praise
Sapphic = relating to lesbianism, derived from the lesbian Greek poet Sappho of the island Lesbos	**Yas queen!** = an affirmative expression to proclaim extreme approval & support

(Davis 2021: 45, 66, 127, 180, 190, 216, 270)

And many more important terms!

(Davis 2021: 121, 262, 274, 273, 281, 284, 277, 321, 326, 325)

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Language, Abilities and Corporalities

- **Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)**

- **The History and Present of Sign Language(s)**

- **Language in the Context of Mental Health**

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

— M.H.

1. Scientific Background: What CRIP Linguists say:

- Ablebodiedness is seen as "the natural order of things"

- We live in a society with a "compulsory ablebodiedness", which in a sense "produces disability" (as not fitting into the ablebodied "norm" automatically makes you "different")
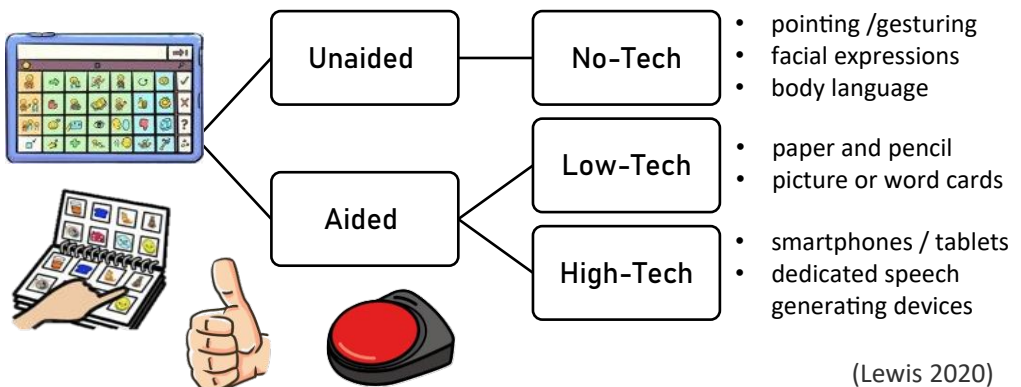
(McRuer 2006: 1-2)

- There are normative expectations for all members of society to talk and communicate "the same"

(Henner & Robinson 2023)

2. What exactly is AAC?

➢ AAC is short for Augmentative and Alternative Communication
➢ **"It can supplement or compensate (either temporarily or permanently) for the impairment and disability patterns of individuals with expressive communication disorders." (**American Speech-Language-Hearing Association)
➢ Some people learn how to use AAC at home, in school or through speech therapy.

3. What are the different kinds of AAC?

Unaided	No-Tech	• pointing /gesturing • facial expressions • body language
Aided	Low-Tech	• paper and pencil • picture or word cards
	High-Tech	• smartphones / tablets • dedicated speech generating devices

(Lewis 2020)

AAC gives people a voice to be heard,

4. Who typically uses AAC?

People with:
- **Developmental disabilities and genetic conditions** (e.g. Autism, Down syndrome)
- **Acquired disorders** (e.g. brain injury, stroke)
- **Progressive disorders** (e.g. Parkinson's disease)
- **Cognitive-communication disorders** (e.g. dementia)

(Hartmann & Sheldon 2024)

5. What can you do to support?

1. Know that there's **not one "right" way** to communicate, but many different ways.
2. Always **talk to the person** and address them, not the AAC-tool.
3. **Be patient** and give people using AAC the time they need to express everything they want to say.
4. **Be open** to clear misunderstandings and don't be afraid to repeat questions.
5. **Advocate for AAC-users** and ask them how they can and want to be supported.

(Kent-Walsh & Mcnaughton 2005)

"[a]bled people expect language acquisition to take place on a very specific timeline, with limited investment from themselves."

(Henner & Robinson 2023: 26)

People using AAC wished for time in conversations so that "the discourse could accommodate their voices"

(Ashby & Causton-Theoharis 2012)

"Some people see AAC-users as having failed to develop speech"

(Henner & Robinson 2023: 24)

6. The use of aac in schools:

Here's a short but insightful youtube video about AAC in schools!

TO FIGHT FOR THEIR RIGHTS AND VOICE THEIR NEEDS!

The History and Present of Sign Language(s)

- Laura Weindl

General Facts:

There is no "native" language of signs → multitude of sign languages exist which are influenced by culture and geography (Power 2022).

Image: KidsCare Home Health

HELLO

Language is not dependent on a certain sensory input (it does not matter if the input is auditory or visual) → language is an intrinsic property of the human nervous system (Ruben 2005).
This also means that the body is a basic element of communication (Bucholtz & Hall 2016).

The first sign languages already existed B.C. (Ruben 2005).

History:

Image: Handtalk

The first finger alphabet was introduced by members of a religious community to communicate during periods of silence in the monastery (Ruben 2005).

Sign languages influenced each other, for example by borrowing, and language families emerged (Power 2022).

Deaf people were seen as dumb and not teachable for a long time (this is even mentioned in religious texts such as the Bible) (Ruben 2005).

Previously sign languages were studied with the help of typical linguistic methods. This is critical because even though they have some similarities sign languages and spoken languages differ in crucial areas (Power 2022).

Image: Sign Language for Changemaking

Methodological adaptions for examining sign languages are in progress today, e.g., the concept of homology as an overarching term to describe inherited and borrowed features of a language (Power 2022).

Projects such as "Sign For Change" were introduced to enhance deaf student's inclusion in education (Sign Language for Changemaking 2024).

The project's mission is to address barriers, provide tailor made methodologies and educational activities to support deaf students and students with hearing problems (Sign Language for Changemaking 2024).

Conclusion:

Because deaf people were seen as inferior for a long time, studies of sign languages were neglected in the past. But even today studies are often carried out through the eye of spoken languages, namely the majority group. Nevertheless, adaptions are in progress and there is more appreciation for the minority group of deaf people today.

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Innovative Approaches in Language Education

1 - The Potential of Critical Pedagogy in English Language Teaching

B.S.
The Potential of Critical Pedagogy in English Language Teaching

Reflecting on my school years, particularly my experiences in English classes, I recall few instances where I thought, "This topic is incredibly fascinating," or "This is a meaningful discussion between me and the teacher." However, in the 1970s, a Brazilian educator pioneered a concept of education that empowers students, viewing them not as uneducated beings but as individuals with unique realities. In this zine, I will explore this concept and demonstrate its potential, possible implementations and problems in the context of English Language Teaching (ELT).

Paulo Freire

Critical Pedagogy

Critical Pedagogy, as articulated by Paulo Freire is a educational philosophy and practice aimed at empowering learners to critically examine their social conditions and take transformative action. Rooted in the socio-political context of mid-20th century Brazil and Chile, it emphasizes the development of critical consciousness and the interplay between education, politics, and social justice. (Au 2009)

❖ **Critical Consciousness (Conscientização)**: Central to Freire's pedagogy is the development of critical consciousness, where learners become aware of the socio-political forces shaping their lives and recognize their capacity to enact change through reflective action (praxis).

❖ **Dialogical Method**: Dialogue is fundamental in Freirean pedagogy, emphasizing reciprocal learning where teachers and students engage as co-learners. This approach contrasts with the "banking model" of education, promoting critical thinking and active participation.

❖ **Role of the teacher**: The teacher serves as an authority and director in the learning process, but not an authoritarian
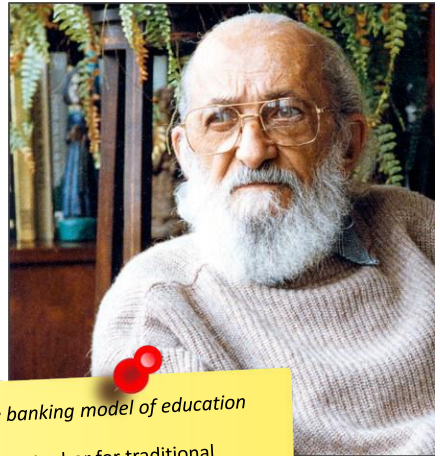
The banking model of education

Is a metaphor for traditional educational practices where teachers "deposit" information into passive students. In this model, students are seen as empty vessels to be filled with knowledge without taking the social, context-specific needs of children and adolescents seriously (Gerlach 2020: 13)

Shifting Paradigms towards Critical Pedagogy?

The field of foreign language didactics has evolved from emphasizing efficient teaching methods to embracing intercultural and transcultural learning. As Gerlach (2020: 9) notes, "In a post-methodological age, [...] aspects of intercultural and transcultural learning are particularly prominent". The goal has shifted from achieving "near-nativeness" to developing "intercultural speakers" with "foreign language discourse ability."

Critical pedagogy, rooted in Paulo Freire's work, offers a promising approach to address perceived shortcomings in language teaching. It aims to educate "for social justice, in ways that support the development of active, engaged citizens" (Crookes 2013: 77, as cited in Gerlach 2020: 13). While its integration into foreign language curricula remains limited, its principles have the potential to foster critical thinking and responsible citizenship.

Implementing Critical Pedagogy in Language Teaching

Crookes (2009:184) outlines key principles for implementing Freire's model in language teaching:

- Develop critical thinking by presenting students' situations as problems for reflection and action.
- Derive curriculum content from learners' life experiences and realities.
- Encourage learners to produce their own materials.
- Organize themes and subject matter around students' realities.
- Position the teacher as a co-learner and problem-poser.
- Empower students in decision-making processes.

Practical Classroom Applications

- ➤ *Student-centered content selection*: Address social inequalities and issues relevant to students' lives.
- ➤ *Dialogic approach*: Create opportunities for meaningful discussions on critical topics.
- ➤ *Critical textbook analysis*: Supplement or challenge textbook content when necessary. Textbooks cover usually target cultural topics and aspects of the middle and upper classes (Gerlach 2020: 23)
- ➤ *Encouraging student voice*: Provide space for students to share their perspectives and experiences.
- ➤ *Critical language analysis*: Examine how language constructs power relations and ideologies. In for example: Advertisement (Gerlach 2020: 19)

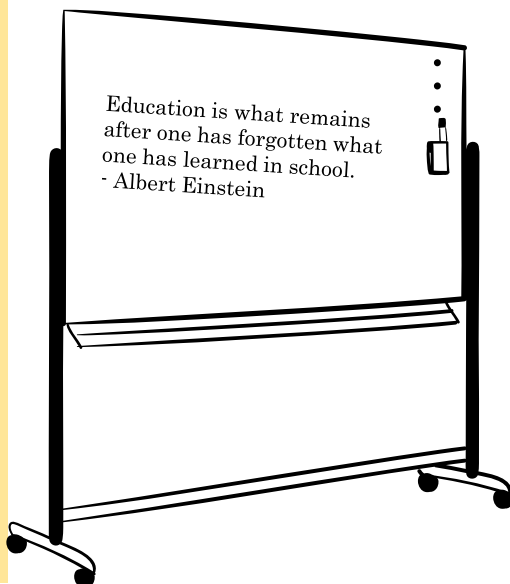## Challenges in Implementation

While critical pedagogy offers valuable principles, several challenges exist in practical implementation:

- − Pressure of standardized testing and accountability(Bonnet &Hericks 2020: 175)
- − Institutional and curricular constraints
- − Potential resistance from students accustomed to traditional methods(Bonnet & Hericks 2020: 172)
- − Lack of suitable materials aligned with critical pedagogy principles
- − Perceptions of being "too political" or radical

Addressing these challenges requires ongoing efforts to bridge theory and practice, including gradual implementation, professional development for teachers, and advocacy for systemic changes that create space for critical approaches in language education.

As Gerlach (2020: 17) emphasizes, "Developing a critical spirit or stimulating this critical ability in learners must be seen as a process that is never completed" . Implementing critical pedagogy in language teaching is an ongoing journey that continually adapts to the evolving needs of learners and society.

Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.
- Albert Einstein

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Feminine Discourse and its Impact on Women's Self-Image

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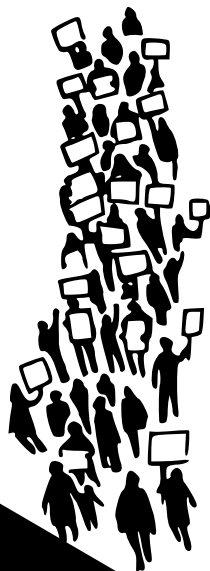
ABOUT THE ZINE

Language serves as both a vehicle for oppression and a tool for resistance. In the seminar **A Linguistics of the Oppressed**, we explored the intersections of linguistics, oppression, liberation and identity. We built upon key concepts from **Critical Applied Linguistics** in order to examine how English(es) can perpetuate or challenge systems of power and oppression.

The student contributions in this zine deal with the multiple intersections of language in general, and the English language in particular, and matters such as imperialism and North/South relationships, abilities and corporalities, gender and sexuality, and critical language teaching.

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