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Avineri, N., & Baquedano-López, P. (2024). ***An Introduction to Language and Social Justice: What Is, What Has Been, and What Could Be***. Taylor & Francis. (184 pp.), $41.59 US (Paperback), ISBN 978-0367725297

Linguistic anthropology reveals how language both shapes and is shaped by culture, identity, and power. This book offers a unique and innovative approach with a clear structure, using the Applied Linguistic Anthropology Framework (ALA) as guidance. For this book, the two authors' positionalities deeply reflect who they are and how their personal backgrounds influence their perspectives on language and social justice. The diversity of their backgrounds contributes significantly and uniquely to their research views and values, promoting an ideology rooted in social justice. This is an excellent textbook for curriculum design, yet it goes beyond a typical textbook. It includes a variety of elements, such as chapter overviews, learning objectives, and guiding questions, providing students and audience with a comprehensive and engaging learning experience.

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Summary

The readership and audience for this book, as envisioned by the authors, differ from the traditional approach: they 'invite the audience to be part of the inquiry and action process' (p.1), encouraging participation in language use and practice. The first chapter, ("Applied Linguistic Anthropology and Social Justice") serves as a general introduction to the entire book. The authors begin by defining language and exploring its concept, moving away from a traditional structuralist perspective. Instead, they emphasize the socio-political dimensions of language, particularly how it intersects with factors such as race, accent, and body type. Importantly, they argue for the need to unlearn and critically examine traditional approaches to language. It also discusses social justice, emphasizing inclusivity and the ways in which linguistic markers are intertwined with social justice issues. As the book highlights, the core value of language social justice is:

> the recognition that present-day language study and analysis must be understood in the historical context of European colonization and expansion into Indigenous lands on this continent, which has led to the marginalization of languages other than the variety of English known as Academic English.

This emphasis underscores the importance of viewing language within a broader historical and social framework.

After clarifying these two concepts, the authors address and explain how language and social justice are interconnected, how they work together, and how they can be applied to real-life social practices through a critical pedagogy approach. Each chapter follows a structured format, covering

topics such as linguistic and human rights. At the end of the first chapter, the authors introduce an applied linguistic anthropology framework, defining it as

> "a multi-scaled, temporally-shaped critical engagement with socially-situated language issues, balancing contextual knowledge, relationship-building, and aspiration for action."

They also provide a timeline-based structure for the book: what is (chapter 3), what has been (chapter 4), and what could be (chapter 5), with each chapter representing a different dimension.

In chapter two, ("Centering Language: A Lexicon for Language and Social Justice Issues"), the authors address that language is "central" to social justice (p.29). One of the most significant tools they create is a "terms of engagement" framework and a language and social justice lexicon, referred to as LSJL. This lexicon provides a set of terms that offer clear guidelines for addressing language and social justice issues. These terms serve as a helpful starting point for conversations and research ideas alike. LSJL is explored from two key perspectives: the recognition of language in education and the representation of Indigenous groups.

Chapter three ("What Is: Applied Linguistic Anthropological Methods for LSJI Inquiry") mainly discussed how ideology reflects on the Chapter three and chapter four as the book says go "hand in hand", they have provided us with the framework on two different levels. As the book suggests, Chapters Three and Four go "hand in hand", offering a framework that examines both large-scale social structures and systems as well as smaller, individual-level interactions and everyday behaviors. Chapter Three delves into methods of linguistic anthropology for LSJI inquiry, presenting a robust framework for understanding the "linguistic and cultural landscape". It introduces six thoughtfully sequenced activities; each paired with questions that can serve as interview prompts for qualitative research. Each activity is followed by a vignette that highlights real-world examples, using scaffolding to guide readers toward a deeper understanding. These activities effectively demonstrate how language practices intersect with social justice issues in daily life, providing rich insights into the connections between language and social equity. Additionally, the chapter underscores the importance of the intersectionality of identity and positionality in relation to one's research topic, highlighting the critical role of subjectivity.

In Chapter Four ("What Has Been: Deepening the Connections between Past and Present"), by discussing what the situation of language justice has been, the chapter developed the connection between the past and present. This chapter mainly focused on analysis two cases, one about the dominance of English, one about the indigenous representation. I find the juxtaposition of these two cases powerful and effective. In my opinion, placing the dominance of English alongside the marginalized status of Indigenous languages creates a powerful contrast, further highlighting English's dominance and the vulnerability of other minority languages. It works like a mirror, reflecting their stark differences regarding their linguistic social status.

Chapters five ("What Could Be: Relationships, Aspirations, and Actions") and six ("Now What") serve as guides for taking practical steps toward social change. These chapters provide a future-oriented direction, connecting theory and framework with actionable practices. Students are encouraged to develop a "multi-faceted plan for a specific LSJI-related action project". The concept of the "multiplicitous self" emphasizes how individuals exist in relation to others, both affectively and experientially, engaging in acts of resistance and liberation. Chapter Five offers numerous advocacy resources, giving students clear guidance for action. The final chapter includes a note to both students and educators, underscoring the unique interaction between the authors and the audience. This message aligns perfectly with the book's themes and ethos, embodying a deeply humanistic and

compassionate approach. It reflects the book's core commitment to language and social justice, providing a true humanistic perspective that resonates with the work's overall mission—language and social justice.

Evaluation

This textbook is structured to be easy to read and effectively conveys new topics. One of the innovations of this book is its clear structure; it presents a well-defined framework along with a chronological narrative that moves through the past, present, and future. Understanding history allows us to grasp the root causes of current social, cultural, and political issues. By knowing what led to certain events or systems, we can better understand why things are the way they are today. As Avineri and Baquedano-López state, "many forms of representation can become issues of language and social justice." As what Irvine and Gal (2000) noted in their classic piece: "history inquiry also has a contemporary relevance, to the extent that early representations of sociolinguistic phenomena influenced later representations and even contributed to shaping the sociolinguistic scene itself." Languages are socially and historically constructed, and awareness of historical injustices through the lens of language can be a powerful driver for social justice and reform. Only by understanding the historical context of inequities and injustices, as well as their sociohistorical roots, can we effectively look toward the future and be better equipped to advocate for change and promote social justice.

This book transcends the conventional boundaries of a textbook, offering not only academic insights but also a profound exploration of its subject matter. I particularly appreciate that each chapter features a 'vignette' sharing real-life experiences related to language and social justice. The combination of theoretical frameworks and personal narratives gives this book a unique structure, as the vignettes vividly illustrate real social justice issues connected to language. Their inclusion makes the material both compelling and persuasive. Additionally, each chapter offers reflective sections that enrich the examples and analyses, encouraging readers to revisit familiar issues and prompting a deeper examination of topics we may have thought we already understood. This "cyclizing of thoughts" would encourage both educators and students to think deeper.

As a teacher, I appreciate the richness of the content in this book. However, due to its diverse elements, the structure may feel somewhat complex when first using it as a textbook. It would be beneficial for the authors to provide a brief 'how to use' note for each section, alongside those detailed questions, to help educators maximize the effectiveness of these elements.

Conclusions

The book comprises six chapters and serves as an essential resource for anthropology and social justice studies. Structured as a textbook, each chapter includes guiding questions to prepare readers for discussion, as well as follow-up questions, reflections, and detailed practical activities and project ideas for educators. This makes it an invaluable pedagogical tool. The book is suitable for use as semester-long course material and is an excellent resource for self-guided learning. In the field of education, we often say that language theory is ideally applied at both practical and pedagogical levels. This book exemplifies the ethos of this combination. As I mentioned earlier, it provides detailed scaffolding with questions, making it particularly beneficial for pedagogical purposes.

Reference

Irvine, J. T., & Gal, S. (2000). Language ideology and linguistic differentiation. *Regimes of language: Ideologies, polities, and identities*, *81*, 35-84