



# Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice: An Introduction to Applied Sociolinguistics

By Ingrid Piller

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## Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice: An Introduction to Applied Sociolinguistics By Ingrid Piller

Understanding and addressing linguistic disadvantage must be a central facet of the social justice agenda of our time. This book explores the ways in which linguistic diversity mediates social justice in liberal democracies undergoing rapid change due to high levels of migration and economic globalization.

Focusing on the linguistic dimensions of economic inequality, cultural domination and impurity of political participation, *Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice* employs a case-study approach to real-world instances of linguistic injustice. Linguistic diversity is a universal characteristic of human language but linguistic diversity is rarely neutral; rather it is accompanied by linguistic stratification and linguistic subordination. Domains critical to social justice include employment, education, and community participation. The book offers a detailed examination of the connection between linguistic diversity and inequality in these specific contexts within nation states that are organized as liberal democracies. Inequalities exist not only between individuals and groups within a state but also between states. Therefore, the book also explores the role of linguistic diversity in global injustice with a particular focus on the spread of English as a global language. While much of the analysis in this book focuses on language as a means of exclusion, discrimination and disadvantage, the concluding chapter asks what the content of linguistic justice might be.

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## Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice: An Introduction to Applied Sociolinguistics By Ingrid Piller Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #7622902 in Books
- Published on: 2016-03-22
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 5.70" h x .90" w x 8.60" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 296 pages

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Ingrid Piller presents a powerful case for how language is variously overlooked or misunderstood as a factor that entrenches disadvantage and inequality in a globalized society. She argues that discrimination based on language persists, often justified by appeal to the false premise that individuals exercise complete control over their own linguistic repertoires, and reinforced by tacit assumptions embedded in our cultural practices."--*New Books Network*

"This is a serious book on a serious subject. In a globalized world whose rhetoric celebrates linguistic diversity, Ingrid Piller shows that the reality is one of systemic inequality and disadvantage-and makes a strong argument that linguistic questions should figure prominently on the social justice agenda in the twenty-first century." --Deborah Cameron, Professor of Language and Communication, University of Oxford

"A vivid, powerful, and sober analysis of how language serves to entrench injustice and create indefensible discrimination. Piller's wide-ranging book should inspire and shock both the general reader and the research world." --Robert Phillipson, Professor Emeritus, Copenhagen Business School (Denmark), and author of books on language policy, linguistic imperialism, and language rights

"Highly recommended."--*Choice*

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"[T]his text is an excellent introduction to how language is connected to local and global power structures."--*Linguist List*

*Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice: An Introduction to Applied Sociolinguistic* meets the author's goal of linking linguistic discrimination with other forms of injustice and discrimination. Throughout the book, the author includes illuminating examples and anecdotes of each concept under discussion... The examples in each chapter are enlightening, surprising, and heart-breaking. The reader does not need to be a sociolinguist

in order to understand the premise of this book; the book cites very few sociolinguistic studies, in fact...Nevertheless, for readers with no background in (socio)linguistics, this text is an excellent introduction to how language is connected to local and global power structures."--*Linguist List*

"The book offers a thorough and powerful analysis of how language-related issues stand in relation to injustice and discrimination. Today's globalized world might celebrate linguistic diversity rhetorically, but the author shows that reality is quite different - one of systemic inequality and disadvantage ... Piller has the experience and expertise to write a volume such as this one, and she has done an amazing and thorough job. The book constitutes an important contribution to language related issues and social justice correlation in today's globalized world."-- *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*

## About the Author

**Ingrid Piller** is Professor of Applied Linguistics at Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. Her research expertise is in Intercultural Communication, the Sociolinguistics of Language Learning and Multilingualism, and Bilingual Education. She serves as editor-in-chief of the international sociolinguistics journal *Multilingua* and curates the sociolinguistics portal *Language on the Move*.

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