

Linguistic Discrimination and the Global South

Sender Dovchin, Curtin University

Linguistic discrimination remains a pervasive yet often invisible form of social inequality that disproportionately affects individuals and communities in and from the Global South. Rooted in colonial histories, unequal language ideologies, and the global dominance of standardized and Eurocentric language norms, linguistic discrimination manifests through accentism, native-speakerism, linguisticism, and the marginalization of local languages and linguistic practices. This presentation examines how linguistic hierarchies intersect with race, class, ethnicity, gender, and mobility to produce systemic exclusions in education, employment, healthcare, and everyday social interactions. Particular attention is paid to the experiences of multilingual speakers, migrants, Indigenous peoples, and users of non-standardized language varieties whose linguistic resources are frequently devalued despite their communicative effectiveness. By centering voices and knowledge from the Global South, the presentation challenges dominant Global North frameworks that often universalize Western linguistic norms and overlook local experiences of inequality. It argues that linguistic discrimination should be understood not merely as a language issue but as a broader manifestation of epistemic injustice and social power. The presentation concludes by advocating for linguistic justice, and educational reforms that recognize diverse forms of languaging, promote equitable participation, and validate the linguistic repertoires of historically marginalized communities. Such an approach is essential for transforming structures of inequality and fostering more inclusive and socially just societies.

Bio

Professor Sender Dovchin is a Senior Principal Research Fellow and Dean Research Humanities, at Curtin University, Australia. She is also an Australian Research Council Fellow and a Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Research Fellow. Previously, she worked at the University of Aizu in Japan and the National University of Mongolia. Professor Dovchin has also served as the Editor-in-Chief of the Australian Review of Applied Linguistics, the nation's top journal. She currently holds the position of Editor-in-Chief for Critical Inquiry into Language Studies, an international Q1 journal. Professor Dovchin has been recognized by The Australian Research Magazine in 2021, 2024, and 2025 as the top linguist in the nation and among the top 250 researchers across all fields in Australia. She is also ranked in the top 2% of the most cited scholars globally, according to the Stanford University citation database.

Proud of her Mongolian heritage, Professor Dovchin actively incorporates Southern theories into her work. She has led multiple high-impact research projects focused on empowering people from Indigenous, refugee, and migrant backgrounds in Australia and beyond. Professor Dovchin has authored numerous research monographs and edited volumes with prestigious international publishers such as Cambridge University Press and Oxford University Press. Additionally, she has published over 70 peer-reviewed journal articles, widely regarded as benchmarks of scholarly excellence in the discipline.