

## **LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE. AN INTRODUCTION TO APPLIED SOCIOLINGUISTICS**

Ingrid Piller. *Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice. An Introduction to Applied Sociolinguistics*. Oxford University Press, 2016 (Paperback). Pp. 296. \$29.95, ISBN: 9780199937264.

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In theory, in this globalized era it is believed that people around the world in and out an academic circle promote the pride of being different and seem to celebrate diversity in all aspects including linguistic diversity. We've been taught to be aware that language reflects people's social position and their way of life. However, in reality everywhere, welcoming varieties of mankind seems to exist only in theory. It's not actually easy to practice. Linguistics diversity or linguistic equality over the world, for example, as Ingrid Piller make a strong argument that it is only rhetoric—it is not in place yet. In fact, language, especially a dominant one for instance English, is used to divide people and makes some people disadvantage.

The author contends that linguistic disadvantage is real and still growing in many sectors. Discrimination via linguistic codes is systematic in practicality. In a work place, for instance, both in a local and global context, language performance endorsed by a certain body of standard is one of the important criterion of justification. Powerfully enough, it can include or exclude people to a community of practice. Ingrid Piller's book "Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice. An Introduction to Applied Sociolinguistics" echoes this phenomenon.

Originally developed from "Language on the Move" blog ([www.languageonthemove.org](http://www.languageonthemove.org)), this book is firstly aimed to provide an overview of contemporary research related to into linguistic diversity and social justice. In addition, the book is aimed to show the deep connections of linguistic diversity, linguistic discrimination, inequality, social justice, and neoliberal ideology within the context of both individuals and states. The book is intended to serve as a systematic exploration of the social ramification of linguistic diversity. Most importantly, the author hopes that the book will make the readers start thinking about linguistic impact which in fact has lots of disadvantages to us. That is, linguistic disadvantage is a form of structural disadvantage that needs to be debated and taken seriously.

The book is well written and structured. With a critical approach and a friendly writing style, Ingrid Piller captures the readers' interest by taking them to explore issues about linguistic discrimination in today's society. Grounded in a case-study approach and everyday stances from around the world, this book takes the reader to understand the core issue through diverse research studies, cases, personal anecdotes and reflections. This book is drawn from a variety of academic discipline namely law, political theory and sociolinguistics. Piller shows the reader to real-world examples of linguistic injustice reported in research and the media. Piller takes the readers to see how language brings harm, making individuals vulnerable to exploitation and discrimination.

The focus of the book is on linguistic diversity and social injustice at both individuals and nation-state level. Regarded as the work in Applied Sociolinguistics, the book touches on

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the linguistic dimensions of economic inequality, cultural domination, neoliberalism and imparity of political involvement. As the title “Introduction to Socio-Applied Linguistics” suggests, Piller addresses these issues to provide better understanding of linguistic phenomenon in relation to society at the current period of time. Based on a pragmatic approach, Piller shows the reader the close and deep connection among linguistic diversity and economic inequality, neoliberal ideology and cultural domination in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. She calls for more debates and deeper discussion to realize these issues in today’s practice. It is the author’s desire to bridge the gap of inequalities between individuals, communities and nations. Piller hopes that these issues should be kept within relatively narrow margins. Most significantly, seeking possible solutions and exploring options to current problems relates to linguistic injustice are another significant focus in this book.

The book is well organized and balanced into eight chapters. The book covers issues related to current debates across the sociolinguistics and applied linguistics disciplines. At the outset of the early pages, Piller situates the core concept to the reader and invite the debate from the use of the visual metaphor on the cover, a variant of the lady justice with eyes and ears covered, until the end of the book. Throughout the book, Piller addresses the social concept, sets the tone, and delivers the core message via cases and studies.

Chapters 1-3 situate the reader in terms of conceptual foundations of the ways in which linguistic diversity intersects with social justice. These chapters introduce the reader to the overview of linguistic diversity, then move to describe its stratification and the subordination of linguistic diversity. Chapters 4-6 examine the role of linguistic diversity in various areas namely workplaces (chapter 4), educational contexts (chapter 5) and human security and participation (chapter 6). The major agenda of these chapters is the description of the intersection between linguistic diversity and social justice at a nation-state level. This also includes the inequalities and power struggles between the rich nations and the poor nations. The last two chapters (chapter 7-8) explore global centers and peripheries and address the role and the impact of global English toward global inequality around the world.

It’s amazing how the author takes the reader via an exploration of language use in a new aspect. With a critical lens, Piller invites the reader to join her conversations along with the investigation of selected real-world cases and sociolinguistic studies throughout this book. By this way, the reader can reflect on the taken for granted issue or the rhetorical position of the notion of diversity. Much of the cases, personal anecdotes, studies informed in this book center on language as a means of making people become “others”—which becomes a systematic exclusion.

The book has a timely and significant contribution to the field of English education and Applied Socio-linguistics. This book offers an excellent piece of an introduction to study about power struggles between the local and global power structure. Piller offers a powerful proof of how language relates to injustice and discrimination in a globalized society. The book critically takes reader to explore the social injustice issues through different cases. These cases confirm how linguistic discrimination persists. Although some cases mentioned in this book need more detail to fill the gap of understanding, the book prompts thinking about linguistic disadvantage as a form of structural disadvantage that needs to be seriously taken into consideration and invites more debates for deeper investigation. This book is not only inspirational but some might find it delightful or shocking to the understudied aspects Piller attempts to present.

This book is, therefore, highly recommended to policy makers, language educators, legal advisers, professionals and graduate students who are looking for a combination of thought provoking and pleasure out of the reading in order to sharpen intercultural skills. The author writes about a serious subject with lay writing style. With the critical content, this book should be widely read because it addresses serious linguistic issue which has been taken for granted for a long time. In particularly, it can be a wake –up call to English teachers/language

educators who tend to look at English education and/ or linguistic studies within only classroom's wall. In terms of research contribution, this book invites researchers to question theoretical and methodological traditions related to language and its construct. Piller has done a wonderful job in paving a new way of thought to move the applied sociolinguistic discipline forward in the future.