# Linguistic discrimination: A cross-cultural study of experiences of non-majority language speakers in Slovakia and Spain

Ewelina Urbanska, University College Cork, Ireland

Martin Plachetka, University College Cork, Ireland

## Abstract

Non-majority languages are undeniably part of every culture. Those who belong to a non-majority language group are often subjected to sidelining in various areas of life, e.g., education system, labour market or social settings. This qualitative study outlines the extent of linguistic discrimination and its impact on the speakers of non-majority languages. It explicitly concentrates on two non-majority language groups, i.e., Romani language speakers in Slovakia and English speakers in Spain. Two very distinct groups are purposely chosen to emphasise the omnipresent existence of linguistic discrimination and its effect on the speakers of the non-majority language members of society. Findings highlight that both groups experience similar levels of discrimination across multiple settings and that the discrimination faced often intersects with race and ethnicity.

**Keywords**: linguistic discrimination, raciolinguistics, Romani, English

## Introduction

Linguistic discrimination, known as linguicism or raciolinguistics, presents society with multifaceted challenges due to its subtle and often implicit nature (Nguyen, 2022; Orzulak, 2023). Unlike other forms of discrimination such as appearance-based racism, linguistic discrimination operates opaquely, making it difficult to detect and address. Such lack of transparency frequently results in its dismissal or trivialization, leaving affected individuals to endure injustice silently. Those subjected to linguistic discrimination, particularly racialized communities, often find their linguistic practices belittled or devalued, reinforcing a hierarchical structure where dominant language norms are upheld as the standard (Ramjattan, 2023). Moreover, this intangibility is frequently exploited by those in power, who may dismiss such discrimination as non-

existent simply because it lacks the evident visibility of other forms of bias (Bourdieu, 1991). This invisibility allows oppressors to perpetuate linguistic hierarchies without accountability further embedding the marginalisation of those who do not conform to dominant language norms (Gal and Irvine, 2019). Consequently, victims of linguicism and Raciolinguistic bias are often left without a platform to voice their objections or seek redress, perpetuating a cycle of silence and exclusion.

With this in mind, the current study sets out to explore the lived experiences of linguicism and raciolinguistics among two distinct groups: English Speakers living in Spain and Romani speakers in Slovakia. It uses semi-structured interviews to focus on linguistic discrimination in the contexts of education, employment and social encounters as experienced by speakers of the non-dominant languages in both societies. The English speakers in Spain are characterised as recent immigrants, whereas Romani speakers in Slovakia are recognised as an autochthonous national minority. The decision to include both groups derives from a comparative approach to understanding how linguistic discrimination intersects with other forms of marginalization such as appearance-based racism across different contexts (Murillo and Smith, 2011). While Romani speakers in Slovakia face significant racial discrimination, linguistic prejudice is also omnipresent. English speakers in Spain may encounter discrimination rooted in both linguistic differences and broader prejudices due to their immigrant status (Gazovicova, 2015; Llurda and Mocanu, 2024). Comparative studies allow for insights into commonalities and differences in experiences, contributing to broader discussions on minority rights and social inclusion (Smith, 2020).

## Literature Review

### Linguistic Discrimination

Linguistic discrimination, either defined in terms of linguicism or raciolinguistics, is not a new concept. It has been explored for over three decades by authors such as Skutnabb-Kangas (1988) and Phillipson (1992), and, more latterly, using the term Raciolinguistics by Flores and Rosa (2015). The research concludes that acts of linguicism occur when someone's personality, character, education or social status is judged through the lens of their linguistic capabilities or the way they speak. Unfair judgment often takes place once atypical pronunciation or uncommon use of lexis and syntax are detected triggering negative biases and stereotypes, leading to instances of hostility, exclusion, or direct discrimination (Lippi-Green, 2012). For example, individuals with non-standard accents may be perceived as less competent or intelligent, resulting in social exclusion and diminished professional opportunities (Derwing and Munro, 2009). The term Raciolingusitcs, initially introduced by Flores and Rosa in 2015 during their deliberation of the 'appropriateness' in language in the education system in America furthers the concept of linguicism. It does so, among other ways, by highlighting how language practices of racialized minorities are often deemed inadequate and deficient. Such perceptions of deficiency may give rise to non-standardised speakers being rendered *languageless* ''by framing them as incapable of producing any legitimate language'' Rosa (2016, p. 163). In the following, literature focusing on linguistic discrimination and raciolinguistics in educational, employment and social contexts will be discussed.

**Educational Context**

In terms of education, Murillo and Smith (2011, p.45) define linguicism as "discrimination against a speaker because of how they speak, write, or even sing, which has profound negative effects on children in school". Meyer (2009) acknowledges that although language discrimination is less evident than other issues that children often

experience (e.g., poverty), linguistic discrimination significantly influences children's emotional well-being, academic development, relationships, and employment. Most educational settings promote the use of the dominant language (variety) within a given country. Students from linguistic minority backgrounds often face significant challenges in meeting these standards, which can impact their academic performance and overall educational experience (García and Kleifgen, 2018; Snell and Cushing, 2022). These students may struggle with language barriers that are not adequately addressed by the education system, leading to disparities in educational outcomes (Menken and Solorza, 2015). Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) and Cummins (2001) document systemic barriers and social exclusion in educational contexts, aligning with respondents' reports of microaggressions and overt exclusion. Piller (2016) further links linguistic discrimination with ethnic and racial discrimination, echoing participants' experiences of intertwined forms of social exclusion.

Specifically in terms of Roma children, this has been corroborated by Plachetka (2021), Messing (2017) and O'Nions (2010) who highlight linguistic discrimination against Roma children within the Slovak, Czech and Hungarian education systems. Both majority-language only education and forced segregated schooling not only result in a curtailment of further educational opportunities, but likewise lead to limited access to other social groups and systems. Additionally, students lose the sense of belonging to a society which affects their feelings of identity, self-confidence and interracial relationships. Moreover, many Roma children avoid using Romani in schools due to fear of discrimination and a perceived obligation to use the majority language.

**Employment Context**

Moving onto the employment context, linguistic discrimination based on accent is a recurring theme. Munro (2003) explores the case of a Polish-born educator who

emigrated to Canada and successfully obtained a teaching position. However, his professional legitimacy was questioned by the school board due to his accent leaving him feeling humiliated and mortified. Poster (2007) gives a similar example of linguistic discrimination based on employees' accent in a US call centre. The author describes that when American customers ring a call-centre and hear an Indian accent, they negatively judge the knowledge and professionalism of the employee preferring to speak with an agent whose accent is more similar to theirs.

Drawing on the concept of raciolinguistics, Ramjattan (2018) explores the intersection between linguistic discrimination and physical appearance. He describes the process of hiring an English language teacher and the expectation of whiteness. In this case, the applicant was an Asian woman with a European surname. During the interview, the candidate ‘’was made to feel guilty for having a European surname, while the interviewer showed little respect by inquiring about her surname in a dismissive manner" (p. 130). Initially, the applicant's legitimacy as an English language teacher was accepted due to the surname, but her Asian appearance led to a series of inappropriate interview questions reflecting a lack of belief in her professional ability. Linguistic discrimination intersects with racial and cultural biases which can be aimed at people who do not fit into the standardised characteristics, i.e., physical appearance, ethnicity, place of birth or linguistic background.

**Social Settings**

In terms of linguistic discrimination in social settings, Dovchin (2020) presents case studies of L1 English speakers living in English dominant societies whose legitimacy as native English speakers was constantly challenged due to their race/ethnicity. For example, a New Zealander of Somali Muslim origin, despite English being her L1, experienced continuous microaggressions in the form of compliments on her great

English. She felt people assessed her linguistic abilities through the way she looked, the way she dressed and her ethnic background. This perpetual linguistic stereotyping made her feel excluded and lonely. She understood that she does not match the perceived white image of an L1 speaker of English. Subsequently, she suffered social anxiety and linguistic inferiority complex. Similarly, Dovchin documents the case of a North American man of Chinese origin whose L1 is English. He had to endlessly deal with people assuming that he could not speak English very well. He admitted feeling excluded from the society due to the fact that his proficiency in English was wrongly judged through the lens of race and his physical appearance.

## Methodology

In light of the above, the current paper aims to add to the literature on linguistic discrimination and raciolinguistics by comparing and contrasting the lived experiences of marginalised and non-dominant language speakers. It does so by exploring the following research questions:

1. How do participants experience linguistic discrimination across a number of settings?
2. How does this intersect with their status?

### Participants

For the purpose of this study, two distinct groups of speakers of a non-majority language in two different countries were identified: Romani speakers from Slovakia and English speakers living in Spain. Ten participants were selected using purposeful sampling method (see table 1). The Slovak Roma participants come from a location with a high-density of the members of this ethnic group. The English speakers live in a number of areas in Spain and were accessed via the researchers' existing social networks, friendships, and social media groups.

**Table 1**

| Slovak Roma Participants | | | English Speakers Participants | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Participants | Gender | Age | Participants | Gender | Age |
| SR 1 | F | 40 | E 1 | M | 21 |
| SR 2 | F | 18 | E 2 | M | 18 |
| SR 3 | F | 54 | E 3 | F | 32 |
| SR 4 | F | 21 | E 4 | F | 52 |
| SR 5 | M | 38 | E 5 | F | 31 |

***An overview of participants***

## Data collection

This study employs in depth semi-structured interviews in order to give voice to the participants' lived experiences of (racio)linguistic discrimination. The duration of each interview varied according to each participant involved in the study. On average, the interviews lasted approximately forty-five minutes. The questions were focused on exploring (racio)linguistic experiences occurring in a diversity of social contexts. The interviews with the English speakers in Spain were carried out in English. With Romani speakers, participants responded in Slovak and sometimes blended Romani into their answers. The interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim and then translated to English where necessary. Ethical approval for the study was granted by University College Cork Social Research Ethics Committee.

## Data Analysis

Data were analysed thematically using a hybrid of both deductive and inductive coding techniques following Braun and Clarke (2006). This process not only captured the

diversity of participants' experiences but also revealed the interplay of personal, social, and cultural factors shaping their experiences of and responses to linguistic discrimination.

## Findings

Findings will be presented in three sub-sections: participants' experiences of discrimination in the education system, workplace and social settings.

### Educational Context

(Racio)linguistic discrimination often starts at an early age. In educational settings, students might feel excluded or comments might be made regarding the way they speak, look or dress. In the following example, E2, a British national of Moroccan heritage speaks about his experience in a Spanish school. He explains that although his family comes from Morocco, he was born and grew up in England. Therefore, he speaks English and Arabic fluently. Currently, the family lives in Spain. He states that he speaks Spanish with his classmates, but since he misses speaking English, he became a member of an international student society.

> There is an Erasmus club for international students and I signed up almost straight away. We have people from all over the world and I miss speaking English, so it was perfect for me. Sadly, what I noticed is that Spanish kids are not interested in improving their English, so when we spend time together at breaks or lunch time, we are always a separate group. Spanish students form another group and the two don´t mix at all. I find it strange, but it's their choice. (E2)

E2 expresses his surprise at the fact that Spanish classmates are not interested in improving their English skills, avoiding English-speaking students and events. He states that Spanish pupils tend to form their own circle of friends and do not mix with the Erasmus group where English is the language of communication. He does not seem overly upset by the situation but feels that English-speaking colleagues are being marginalised by the Spanish students.

However, what he finds truly problematic is the attitude of his teachers towards dark skin students. Although he is a British national and speaks English (and Arabic) as his first language, he feels he is discriminated against because of his darker skin colour. He adds that there is a common negative perception of Arabic teenagers being troublemakers. He says that because of his heritage, he is deemed a second-class citizen, regardless of the fact that he was brought up in Europe and is fully aware of European social norms and values.

> There is that infamous belief that Arab men are involved in illegal activities and are disrespectful towards women. I know it happens, but it doesn't apply to the entire society. Even though my family comes from Morocco, I grew up with English values and I know right from wrong anyway. I feel that if there are problems at school, we [the Arab kids] are the first to blame. It's really unfair. It's like my skin colour determines who I am. Secondly, the dark skin kids are the first to blame for troubles, but when the teachers need some good English speakers to represent our school, then I'm the first to be called. Actually, it depends […] if they don't know that I grew up in England they look very confused that I'm a fluent English speaker. It´s like a dark skin guy can't speak good English. I feel they are quite dishonest and two faced. (E2)

The teachers seem to accept negative stereotypes about darker skinned males and are quick to pass judgement based on their physical appearance. Such racial discrimination has consequences for linguistic discrimination. Fluency in English has high value within the school; however, some teachers have conflated fluency in English with whiteness. As a result, the participant's ability to speak English was doubted because did not match the envisioned image of a white English speaker. Therefore, his racialised physical appearance was used as an indicator of his English proficiency.

When it comes to the Roma people in Slovakia, Slovak is often promoted over Romani in schools. This has been identified as one of the primary reasons for avoiding the usage of Romani. Teachers play a crucial role in obliging Romani speakers to speak Slovak. SR4 states:

> During the breaks, we always used to speak in Romani and when we were approached by the non-Roma, we spoke in Slovak, but a lot of non-Roma acquired Romani because they were friends with the Gypsies. During the classes, we were trying to speak Slovak, because the teacher was there, but we spoke Romani quietly among each other. It was probably a habit speaking Slovak in front of the teacher, it was also polite. But it is also true, that the teachers used to always tell us to speak Slovak and not Romani because we will need Slovak more than Romani when we are older. They used to always tell us to learn Slovak, because it is important to know how to speak and write Slovak in order to get a good job in the future. (SR4)

This suggests that the use of Romani in schools is negatively perceived. It is a language which may be spoken in a personal capacity, but within the classroom context, it is discouraged as, according to the education system, it holds no intrinsic value for the child's future or to the greater society. Thus, it can be seen that minoritised, racialised groups can be rendered *languageless* within the education system. Their legitimacy as speakers of high-value languages such as English may be denied and their home/ethnic languages are deemed worthless an impediment.

**Linguistic discrimination in the workplace**

The first examples come from English language teachers' experiences in Spain. E5 is a Brazilian national of Polish origin who was interviewed for a teaching position. He states:

> I'm Brazilian by nationality, as I was born and raised there, but my family comes from Poland and this is why I have a typical Polish surname. I speak Brazilian Portuguese and Polish fluently and I'm also a certified teacher in English and Spanish […] When I first came to Spain, I was looking for a job as an English teacher. Every single interviewer was curiously asking about my family background and my Polish surname, but they had very little interest in my professional career, qualification or work experience […] I felt like I was more of an exotic novelty to them rather than a serious candidate for a job […] I also noticed that they were somehow disappointed when I entered the room, it seemed like they were expecting someone else, I'm not going to lie, it felt like they were expecting a White candidate and I am rather tanned. Needless to say, it was extremely difficult for me to find a job. (E5)

It is obvious from the excerpt that the participant was confronted with two issues surrounding linguistic discrimination. Firstly, his ability to do the job well was assessed

on his nationality and family background rather than on his education and qualifications thus undermining his professionalism. Secondly, he felt that he did not match the interviewers' expectation due to his physical appearance as a non-white person. It is clear that his race was a perceived determiner of his English proficiency and his professional capabilities. As a result, his education and teaching credentials were irrelevant to the interviewers because his English language proficiency was rated through the lenses of his physical characteristics.

E3 shares his experience of instances of (racio)linguistic discriminatory behaviour occurring at a private language school. In this case, the instances came from his students.

> I come from the Caribbean and people are quite ethnically mixed over there […] I am rather dark, as my family is also mixed race. In the school where I teach, at the beginning of each academic year there is always a couple of students shocked that I am actually their teacher because they confuse me for one of the learners. Luckily, in majority of cases, we are able to laugh it off and move-on on friendly terms, but I always wonder where is this narrow-minded thinking coming from. When I chat to them informally, I always hear the same explanation, i.e., that they did not expect a dark skin person teaching English. I´m stunned because it makes me think that they've never heard about migration, mixed race families, etc. and that this kind of thinking must be most likely coming from their parents too. (E3)

In the above excerpt, the teacher is exposed to unfair judgement based on the conflation of English and whiteness. As per their own admission, the students do not expect an English teacher to be of any other colour than White. Due to his Caribbean ethnicity, he is positioned as a learner of English. His legitimacy as an English speaker is rated through the lens of physical appearance.

Turning to the Roma community in Slovakia, there are clear commonalities. Participants frequently report being refused employment opportunities based on their ethnic background, darker skin colour, and distinct linguistic features which not only identify them as members of the Roma ethnic group but also lead employers to

challenge their proficiency in the Slovak language regardless of whether it is their L1 or not.

For members of the Roma community who lack proficiency in Slovak, the issue is starker as they cannot participate in job interviews which are conducted in Slovak, and, as a result, cannot find employment outside their own community. For example, SR 5 states:

> I've had many negative experiences, but I can tell you about my latest job interview. It was for a plumber position, so excuse me for saying it, but you don't need to speak perfect Slovak for this job. There is actually very little interaction between a customer and myself, they just point out the issue and I work on it alone. So, during this particular interview, the manager was already looking at me in a funny way, I didn't really like it. I suppose I'm not as dark as a typical Gypsy, so he couldn't be sure about my background, but when we started speaking, he knew from my accent that I am. From that very moment, I had a feeling I wasn't getting the job and I was right. He asked me a few random, insignificant questions and ended the interview promptly. (SR5)

In light of the above, it is clear that both racialised speakers of English and Romani speakers are discriminated against in the labour market because their way of speaking is not judged by any measures of proficiency. Their legitimacy as competent speakers is determined by the racialised markers of skin colour and accent.

**Social Settings**

Plachetka (2021) observes that the Roma children who were exposed to marginalisation and segregation from their Slovak peers, due to perceived or real language differences at an early age, find it hard to integrate into the Slovak society as adults. As a result of enforced exclusion from Slovak peers, some adult Roma cannot speak Slovak fluently which causes embarrassment and helplessness. Therefore, they feel unwelcome when using Romani in public. SR 1 states:

> I was on a bus and I saw one of my school friends, so we started chatting immediately. We were not speaking too loudly, as we were already well aware that Romani is not overly welcome among Slovak people. Well, we received

> quite a few dirty looks and smart comments from people around us, which made us feel very uncomfortable and we stopped speaking then. (SR1)

In the case of the English speakers in Spain, their social life tends to revolve around their own English-speaking circle of friends. Obviously, those who do not speak Spanish face an additional language barrier and clearly cannot communicate with the Spanish society. However, participants in the current study speak Spanish and express a desire for social interaction with local people. E1 notes:

> It's just very strange for me […] although I speak Spanish with my workmates every day and we are all on friendly terms, when we are outside of work, they tend to form their own little group and socialise among themselves. It feels strange as I don't want to interrupt them, but then I also don't want to sit alone either. It felt like we are coworkers at work, but strangers afterwards […] I began socialising with my own [English-speaking] people all the time. (E1)

Although E1 maintained cordial relations with her work colleagues, she felt excluded from social gatherings. As there was no reason for such treatment, she believed she was excluded due to her non-Spanish background and eventually, she decided to socialise with her fellow English speakers only.

The subsequent example demonstrates how E4, an English-speaking immigrant tried to accommodate linguistic and cultural differences in her communication with the Spanish counterparts who did not feel obliged to reciprocate.

> I used to invite my English- and Spanish-speaking friends to my house and we enjoyed many evenings together. The problems started to occur when the Spanish friends began arriving later and later and stayed until early morning hours. I can appreciate the cultural difference and the fact that they eat much later than us, but I did not appreciate that they couldn't alternate and eat a bit earlier from time to time to suit us as well. Secondly, we all tried to speak Spanish, but they never made too much effort to switch to English even though they all spoke it very well. In the end, it became a bit awkward as the Spanish friends continued to arrive extremely late while we were already done eating, kitchen was cleaned up and we were ready for bed. Eventually, it was just easier to stick to the English-speaking friends. (E4)

The above excerpt presents two issues faced by the participant as a host. Firstly, there was a mix of cultural differences, social rules and timekeeping. Although the participant admitted to being flexible and accommodating towards Spanish guests, she felt they did not want to do the same towards the English-speaking colleagues. She further admitted that they acted offended when asked to arrive punctually. Secondly, she stated that although all the English speakers made an effort to speak Spanish, the Spanish guests did not want to switch to English at any stage, regardless of the fact that they were proficient speakers of the language. In the end, there were two separate groups of people, each speaking in their own language. The result was a form of linguistic discrimination whereby Spanish colleagues formed their own group and kept away from the English speakers. Spanish speakers, by separating themselves from the English speakers and maintaining conversations in Spanish only, made a visible division between guests. Since they detached themselves from the English conversation, they discriminate against their colleagues by keeping them apart. Although nothing was said and no arguments took place, it was a silent marginalisation of English-speaking colleagues.

## Discussion

Having examined the subject of (racio)linguistic discrimination impacting members of linguistically marginalised groups in Slovakia and non-majority language speakers in Spain, it can be confirmed that the experiences of both groups are broadly similar; however, key differences emerged. The following discussion d examines their implications for understanding and addressing (racio)linguistic discrimination.

### Experiences of linguistic discrimination

Directly addressing Research Question 1: How do participants experience linguistic discrimination across a number of settings? Participants reported various forms of

discrimination, ranging from subtle microaggressions such as praise of command of their L1, to overt acts of exclusion and marginalisation across all the settings explored. Participants described feeling marginalised, disempowered and experiencing languagelessness (Rosa, 2016) in spaces where they were not recognised as legitimate speakers of the non-majority language, or, where their minority language was not recognised or valued. Instances of linguistic discrimination were often intertwined with other forms of social exclusion, including discrimination based on ethnicity or race. Research consistently highlights the pervasive nature of linguistic discrimination against marginalised language speakers, validating the findings of this study. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) argues that linguistic discrimination is a prevalent issue that intersects with other forms of social exclusion, particularly in educational settings. Cummins (2001) further supports this by demonstrating how minority language students often face systemic barriers that undermine their academic success and sense of belonging. Auerbach (1993) notes that linguistic discrimination can lead to significant psychological impacts, such as feelings of disempowerment and social alienation. However, the findings from this study also highlight that even speakers of high-value languages such as English may also face linguistic discrimination and be rendered *languageless* especially when language intersects with race. This will be explored in the following section.

**Intersectionality and multiple marginalisations**

The study revealed the intersecting nature of (racio)linguistic discrimination with other axes of oppression, highlighting the experiences of individuals who navigate multiple marginalised identities, which ties into Research Question 2: How does this intersect with their status? Participants belonging to ethnic minority groups and indigenous communities reported heightened vulnerability to linguistic discrimination, compounding their experiences of social exclusion and marginalisation.

The concept of intersectionality, originally articulated by Crenshaw (1989), is crucial for understanding how (racio)linguistic discrimination interacts with other forms of oppression. This study's findings resonate with the work of García (2009) and Piller (2016), who illustrate that linguistic discrimination does not occur in isolation but is often intertwined with racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic marginalisation. For instance, indigenous communities frequently face both racial and linguistic prejudice, intensifying their social exclusion, which makes its speakers feel inferior, embarrassed and uncomfortable when speaking their own language (Piller 2016).
May (2012) also highlights how minority language speakers, particularly those from ethnic minority groups such as Roma, experience a compounded form of marginalisation due to their dual minority status.

Intersectional analyses emphasised the need for holistic approaches to addressing linguistic discrimination, recognising the interconnectedness of language-based discrimination with broader systems of power and inequality. The study focused on two distinct linguistic groups. One, the speakers of Romani, being recognised as a minority community with very clear traits of being a linguistic and ethnic minority. On the other hand, the speakers of English, who are typically a group with language capital and status, thus enjoying all linguistic rights. The current research has revealed that even such distinctive linguistic groups can intersect at a point where both experience linguistic discrimination and potential languagelessness. The findings show that the environment a speaker finds themselves in plays a crucial role on how they are viewed and how easily their language can lose its linguistic power. In this case, the speakers of English in Spain face obstacles and reality of a linguistic market of a country where they became a non-majority language group. In some sense, especially the social one, they became marginalised in very ordinary situations, like social gatherings. Within

educational and work environments, their legitimacy as speakers of a high-value language is predicated on racialised physical appearances. However, on this note, it must be noted that English does not seem to be looked down on as an inferior attribute of its speakers. Rather, racialised individuals are often not deemed worthy of speaking English. The same cannot be said about Romani. Its speakers are often the victims of both linguistic and personal discrimination. They are looked down upon because of their language and ethnic background, thus they lose the benefits of social acceptance, linguistic rights as well as social and linguistic capital. Therefore, it must be noted that although where a normally dominant language, in this case English, becomes a minority one, it does not automatically mean that its speakers would experience the same form of discrimination as marginalised linguistic and ethnic groups like the Roma people.

## Conclusion

The unique comparative nature of this study helps shed light on the pervasiveness of (racio)linguistic discrimination among very different groups of speakers across a variety of societal contexts. Speakers of both minority languages and non-majority languages may face social isolation, impeded employment and educational opportunities and languagelessness due to deeply embedded (racio)linguistic ideologies. As (racio)linguistic discrimination is often an invisible form of bias, it is crucial to foster intercultural dialogue and promote positive representations of linguistic diversity in media, education and public discourse to challenge stereotypes and combat linguistic stigma. Finally, enhancing legal protections against linguistic discrimination and enforcing existing anti-discrimination laws.

**Funding**

This study was partially funded by the Irish Research Council under grant number GOIPG/2017/1593

**References**


Alim, H. S., Rickford, J. R., and Ball, A. F. (Eds.). (2016). *Raciolinguistics: How Language Shapes Our Ideas About Race.* Oxford University Press.

Auerbach, E. R. (1993). Reexamining English Only in the ESL Classroom. *TESOL Quarterly, 27*(1), 9-32. doi:10.2307/3586949

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum, 1989*(1), Article 8.

Baugh J. (1997) 'Linguistic discrimination in educational contexts'. In: Wodak, R. and Corson, D. (eds.) *Encyclopedia of Language and Education*, pp. 33-41, Vol 1. Dordrecht: Springer.

Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and Symbolic Power*. Harvard University Press.

Braun, V., and Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77-101.

Cummins, J. (2001). *Negotiating Identities: Education for Empowerment in a Diverse Society*. California Association for Bilingual Education.

Derwing, T. M., and Munro, M. J. (2009). Putting accent in its place: Rethinking obstacles to communication. *Language Teaching*, 42(4), 476-490.

Dovchin, S. (2019). The politics of inequality in translingualism and linguistic discrimination. In T.A. Barrett, and S. Dovchin (Eds.), Critical inquiries in the studies of sociolinguistics of globalization (pp. 84-102). Multilingual Matters.

Dovchin, S. (2020). Introduction to special issue: linguistic racism. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 23:7, pages 773-777.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics*. Oxford university press.

Flores, N., and Rosa, J. (2015). Undoing appropriateness: Raciolinguistic ideologies and language diversity in education. *Harvard Education Review*, 85(2), 149–171.

Gal, S., and Irvine, J. T. (2019). *Signs of Difference: Language and Ideology in Social Life*. Cambridge University Press.

García, O. (2009). *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective*. Wiley-Blackwell.

García, O., and Kleifgen, J. A. (2018). *Educating Emergent Bilinguals: Policies, Programs, and Practices for English Learners*. Teachers College Press.

Gazovicova, T. (2015). Romani pupils in Slovakia. Trapped between Romani and Slovak languages. *ZEP: Zeitschrift für internationale Bildungsforschung und Entwicklungspädagogik*, *38*(1), 18-23.

Hill, J. H. (2008). *The Everyday Language of White Racism*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Hercula, S.E. (2020). Linguistic Inequality in the United States. In: Fostering Linguistic Equality. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Johnson, R. (2015). *Navigating Multicultural Societies: The Interplay of Dominant and Minority Groups*. Journal of Social Issues, 71(4), 761-778.

Lippi-Green, R. (2012). *English with an Accent: Language, Ideology, and Discrimination in the United States*. Routledge.

Llurda, E., & Mocanu, V. (2024). English in Spain: Education, attitudes and native-speakerism. *World Englishes*, *43*(2), 315-331.

May, S. (2012). *Language and Minority Rights: Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Politics of Language*. Routledge.

Menken, K., and Solorza, C. (2015). Principals as linchpins in bilingual education: The need for prepared school leaders. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 18(6), 676-697.

Meyer, R. (2009) 'Portraits, counter portraits, and the lives of children: language, culture, and possibilities'. In: Scott, J. C., Straker, D. Y. and Katz, L. (eds.), *Affirming Students' Rights to their Own Language: Bridging Language Policies and Pedagogical Practices*, pp. 54-67. New York: National Council of Teachers of English/Routledge.

Moscatelli, S., Albarello, F. and Rubini, M. (2008). Linguistic Discrimination in Minimal Groups: The Impact of Status Differentials. Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 27(2), 140-154.

Munro, M. J. (2003). A primer on accent discrimination in the Canadian context. *TESL Canada Journal*, 38-51.

Murillo, L. A., and Smith, P. H. (2011). "I will never forget that": Lasting effects of language discrimination on language-minority children in Colombia and on the US-Mexico border. *Childhood Education*, *87*(3), 147-153.

Murillo, E. G., and Smith, P. H. (2011). *Critical Voices in Multilingual Education: Practical and Theoretical Perspectives*. Routledge.

Nguyen, T. T. T. 2022. "Educational Linguicism: Linguistic Discrimination Against Minority Students in Vietnamese Mainstream Schools." *Language Policy* 21 (2): 167–194. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-021-09601-4.

Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and Language Learning: Extending the Conversation* (2nd ed.). Multilingual Matters.

O'Nions, H. (2010). Different and unequal: the educational segregation of Roma pupils in Europe. *Intercultural Education*, *21*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1080/14675980903491833

Orzulak, M. J. M. (2023). Speaking My Mind: Resisting Linguicism with Language Love. *English Journal*, *112*(6), 21-23. https://doi.org/10.58680/ej202332483

Phillipson, R. (1992). Linguistic Imperialism. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Piller, I. (2016). *Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice: An Introduction to Applied Sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Plachetka, M. (2021). *Language practices and experiences among active and heritage speakers of Romani: A cross-country comparison of Czech and Slovak Roma* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). University College Cork, Cork, Ireland

Poster, W., R. (2007). "Who's on the line? Indian call center agents pose as Americans for U.S.-outsourced firms." *Industrial Relations* 46 (2): p. 271–304.

Purnell, T., Idsardi, W., and Baugh, J. (1999). Perceptual and phonetic experiments on American English dialect identification. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 18(1), 10-30.

Ramjattan, V. A. (2018). Raciolinguistics and the aesthetic labourer. *Journal of Industrial Relations*. 1–13.

Ramjattan, V. (2023). International students and their raciolinguistic sensemaking of aural employability in Canadian universities. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *2023*(282), 159-180. https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2022-0067

Roberts, C., Davies, E. and Jupp, T. (1992). Language and discrimination. A study of communication in multi-ethnic workplaces. New York: Longman.

Rosa, J. D. (2016). Standardization, racialization, languagelessness: Raciolinguistic ideologies across communicative contexts. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, *26*(2), 162-183.

Rosa, J., and Flores, N. (2017). Unsettling race and language: Toward a raciolinguistic perspective. *Language in Society*, 46(5), 621-647.

Shohamy, E. (2006). *Language Policy: Hidden Agendas and New Approaches*. Routledge.

Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (1988). Multilingualism and the education of minority children. In T. Skutnabb-Kangas and J Cummins (Eds), Minority education: From shame to struggle. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, p. 41.

Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2000). *Linguistic Genocide in Education—or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Smalls, K. A. (2018). Linguistic profiling and the construction of racial identities in the United States. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 47, 289-304.

Smith, J. (2020). *Linguistic Discrimination: The Language of Racism and Prejudice in Twenty-First Century America.* Wiley-Blackwell.

Snell, J., and I. Cushing. (2022). "A Lot of Them Write How They Speak": Policy, Pedagogy, and the Policing of 'Nonstandard' English." *Literacy* 56 (3): 199–211.