

Centering Social Justice in Speech- Language-Hearing Sciences Pedagogy: Lessons Learned from the *Critical Conversations* Project

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Driven to DiscoverSM



Introductions



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Munson



**Studies in the Applied Sociolinguistics of
Speech and Language**

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Disclosures

Benjamin Munson

- Paid full-time employee of the University of Minnesota -Twin Cities, continuing relationship, 2000-present

Lizbeth H. Finestack

- Paid full-time employee of the University of Minnesota -Twin Cities, continuing relationship, 2009-present
- Principal Investigator on NIH R01DC019374, 2021-present

Muna Musse & Rachelle Valentin

- Received funding from the University of Minnesota's Gopher Equity Project.
- Alumni and current graduate students of University of Minnesota
- ASHA SPARC Award (Musse)

Land Acknowledgement

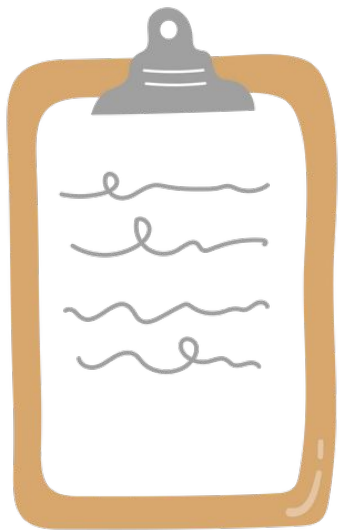
- The University of Minnesota Twin Cities is located on traditional, ancestral, and contemporary lands of Indigenous people. The University resides on Dakota land ceded in the Treaties of 1837 and 1851.
- Honored to be on the land of the Coast Salish peoples where Seattle resides.
- To learn more about the native lands you live on: <https://native-land.ca/>



<https://marlenamyl.es/project/dakota-land-map/?fbclid=IwAR2RW A7yI TEYniQVfSPwhDTdy4zwKbyAi-AVx-poHQo-hp8Aytf1AKt7h Lc%20>

Today's Objectives

At the conclusion of the session, participants will be able to:



1

Describe the gaps in current undergraduate curricula in speech-language-hearing sciences in coverage of issues related to social justice, language and power, and culturally responsive practices.

2

Sketch how content related to social justice, language and power, and culturally responsive practices **can be incorporated into existing undergraduate courses.**

3

Design curricular modules to teach issues related to social justice, language and power, and culturally responsive practices in undergraduate courses.

Today's Roadmap

Marker 1

Identifying the Problem

Marker 3

Workshops

Marker 5

Lessons Learned

Marker 4

Examples of Curricular Changes

Marker 2

Formulating a Plan



Marker 1

Identifying the
Problem

Today's Roadmap

Identifying the problem

Knowledge

Language and Identity

Language Attitudes

Language and Power

Language Policy

Language and Social
Justice

Tools

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Race Theory

Critical Disability Theory

Gender Studies



Marker 1

Identifying the
Problem

Today's Roadmap

Marker 2

Formulating a
Plan

Formulating a plan

- Incorporate these topics in undergraduate courses
 - This requires undergraduate instructors need to be familiar with key issues
 - Would be easier if we had shareable repositories of teaching materials



Gopher Equity Project

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities

<https://gopherequityproject.umn.edu/>

Take the Training

The online training guides you through concepts about identity, inclusion and belonging, and power and privilege, and is important to creating a foundation of equity and inclusion on our campus.

First-Year Students

First-year students take the online training as part of your transition to the U of M campus prior to the start of the semester. Follow-up conversations are part of many college first-year experience courses.

[Start the Training](#)

Undergraduate Students

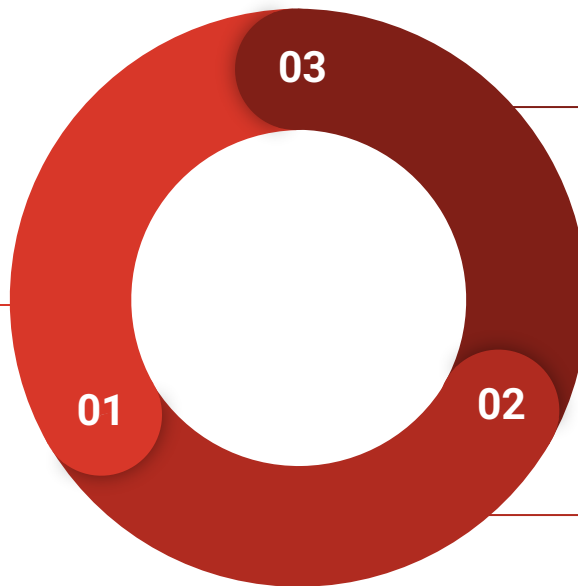
All students are strongly encouraged to take the online training. It is an important part of your role as a student to take part in creating an inclusive campus and learn skills to navigate a diverse campus and society.

[Start the Training](#)

- The **Undergraduate Student Equity & Success Committee** invites applications for Gopher Equity Project (GEP) Microgrants.
- The GEP Microgrants **seek to build an equitable and supportive campus experience** that promotes undergraduate student success for indigenous and students of color.
- This may include **initiatives that promote campus climate, sense of belonging, retention strategies, wellbeing, and/or academic and career success.**

Funding Priorities

Expand Understanding
Projects designed to expand our collective understanding of issues that impact justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, especially for BIPOC students.



Enhance Student Success of BIPOC Students

These projects should aim to boost campus climate, sense of belonging, retention, wellbeing, identity, academic success or career readiness.

Improve Assessment

Projects that explore ways to better understand BIPOC students through data and analysis.

\$2500

Our Project



Faculty and Students Working Together to Integrate Justice, Equity, Diversity, Anti-Racism, and Inclusion Principles into the SLHS Undergraduate Curriculum

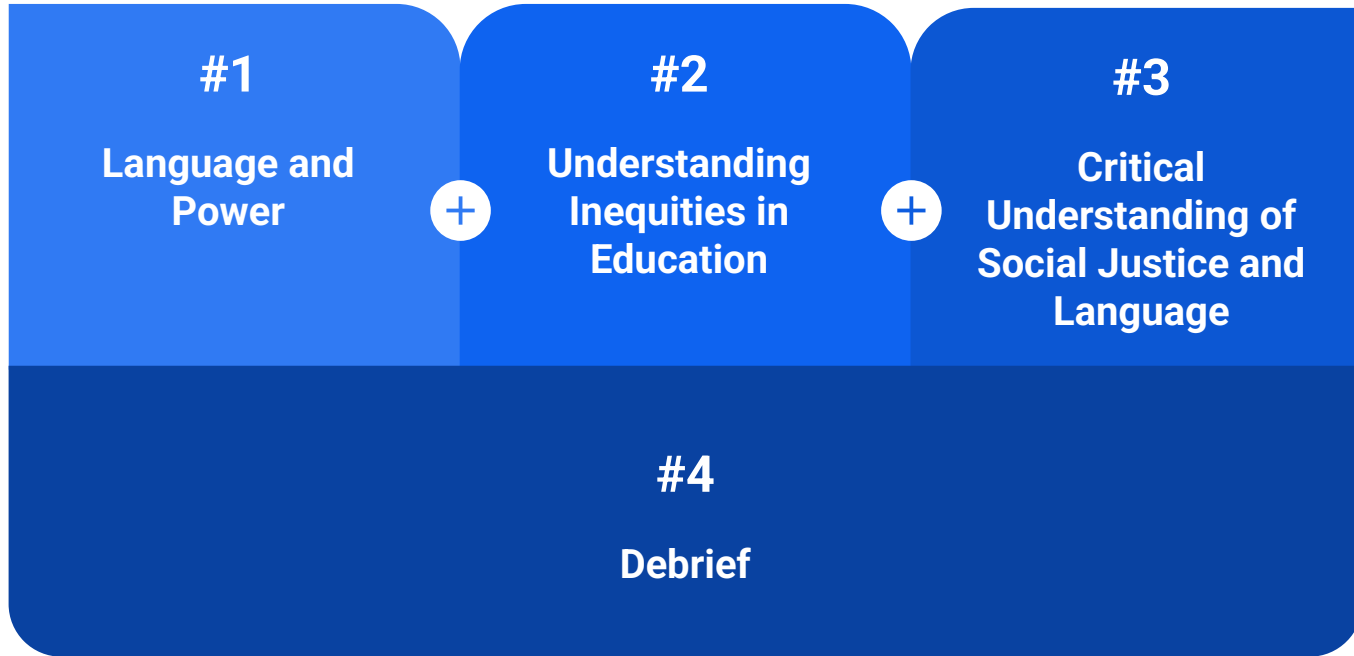
We aimed to center our attention to better serve our undergraduate students by engaging in **systematic discussion** of how we can better address **social justice, anti-racism, diversity, access, and inclusion in our curriculum.**

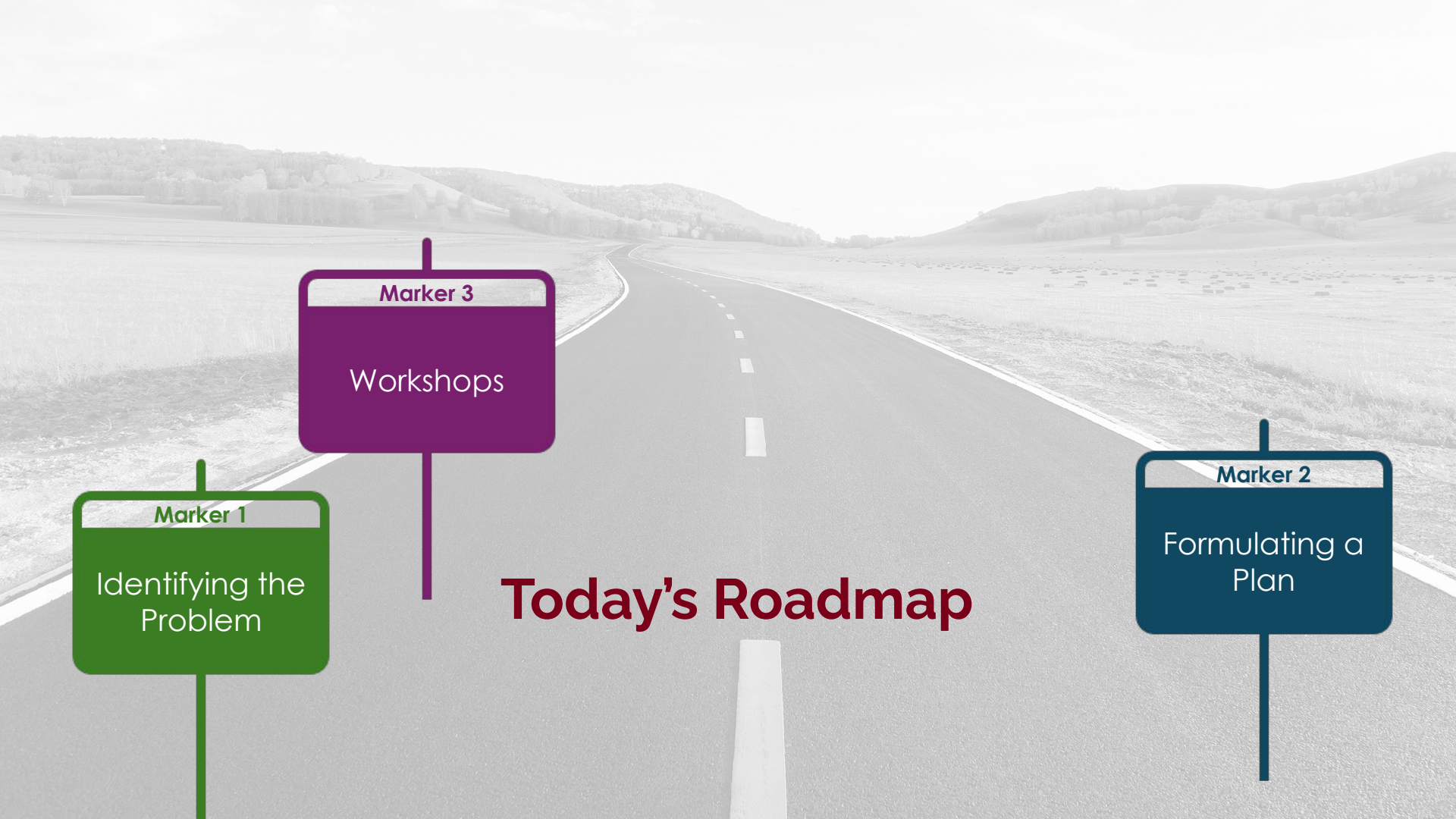
What did we do?

- Hosted four, 2-hr workshops (Spring 2023): 1 hr presentation + 1 hr group discussion on how topic could be infused into SLHS curriculum
- Hired two (amazing) undergraduate students to help develop and facilitate the workshops
- Invited all all SLHS students (undergraduate, professional, and PhD students), faculty, and staff
- Attendees completed pre- and post-session surveys



The Workshops





Marker 3

Workshops

Marker 1

Identifying the
Problem

Marker 2

Formulating a
Plan

Today's Roadmap

Workshop 1: Language and Power

- Speaker:
 - Dr. Alayo Tripp, Assistant Professor of Linguistics, University of Florida
 - <https://itstripp.com/>
- Topic: How language variation is used to construct differences in social power
- This topic can help us to understand some long-standing issues in our field



Workshop 1: Language and Power

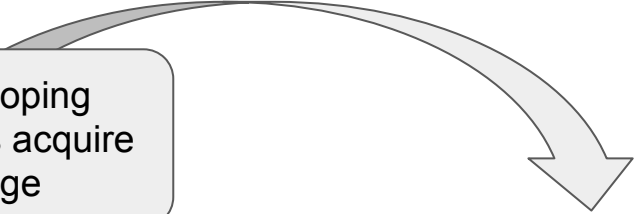
The notion of 'perceiving race' through linguistic variation is better understood as a process of racialization, in which behaviors are attributed to racial identities of unequal power.

Interested in learning more? Come to Munson & Tripp's presentation *Race, Racialization, and Speech Intelligibility: Implications for Clinical Practice in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology*, Friday morning 9:30-10:30
CC/Summit/Summit-445-446

The notion of disability is also socially constructed

Interpreting Disorder vs. Difference

- Requires assumptions of normativity



Typically developing
hearing babies acquire
spoken language

Interpreting Disorder vs. Difference

- Requires assumptions of normativity

Typically developing
hearing babies acquire
spoken language

Typically developing
Deaf babies do not

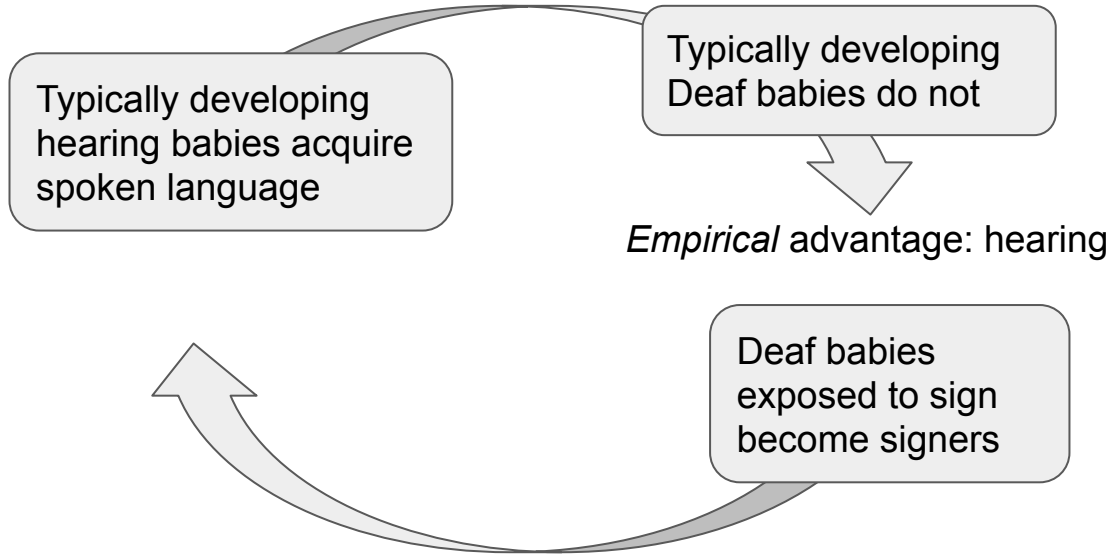


Empirical advantage: hearing



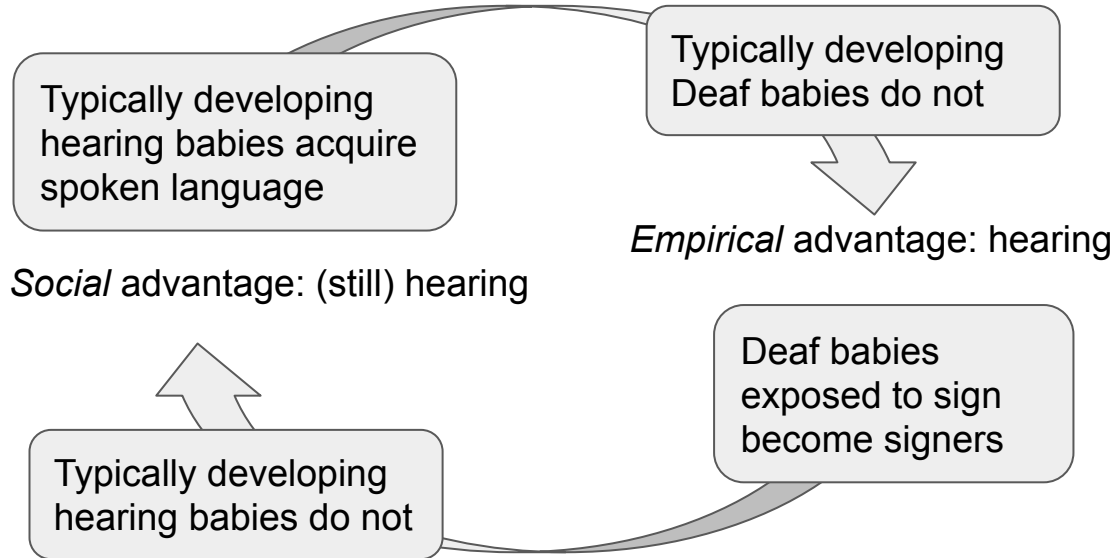
Interpreting Disorder vs. Difference

- Requires assumptions of normativity



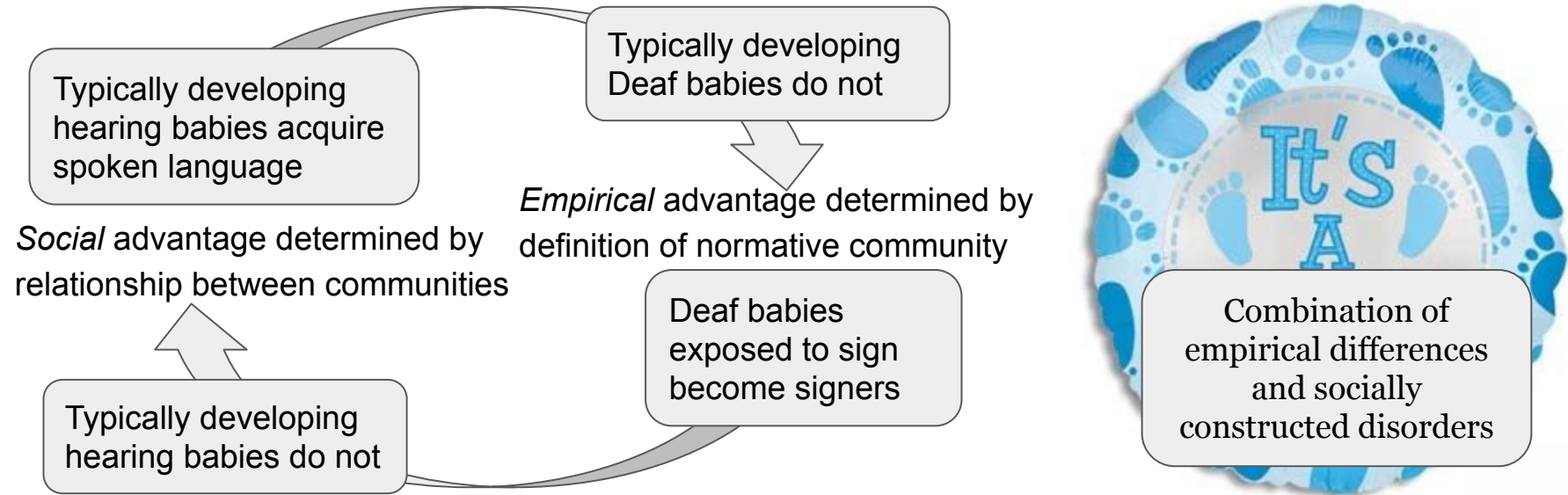
Interpreting Disorder vs. Difference

- Requires assumptions of normativity



Transcending Disorder vs. Difference

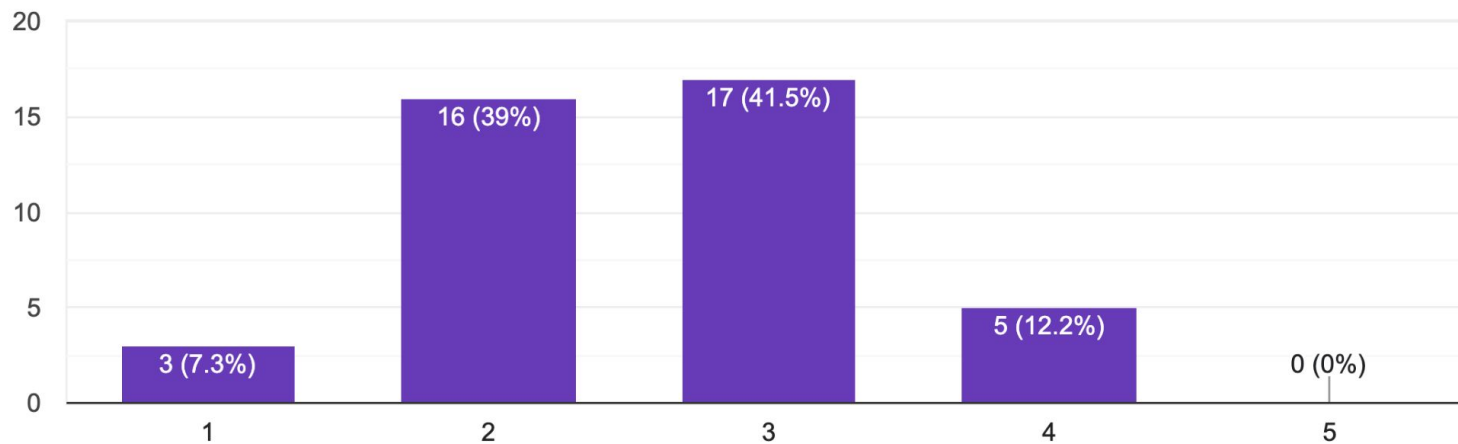
- Requires **critically examining** assumptions of normativity



Workshop 1 Pre-Survey

This workshop is on Language and Power. What is your familiarity with this topic?

41 responses



Workshop 1: Qualitative Data

Q: What is the relationship between language and power?

- Language is shaped by those in power to preserve their power. Language is co-opted from those without power to diminish their power.
- Power and culture are each both passively and deliberately coded into language and are further enforced by societal norms. Labeling, categorization, division, as well as community, cooperation, and culture are all factors regarding power that can be deconstructed from language.
- Individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds may be marginalized as a result of prescriptive beliefs within the field. Throughout history, groups that possess power tend to display more "socially acceptable" dialects than those who have been oppressed.

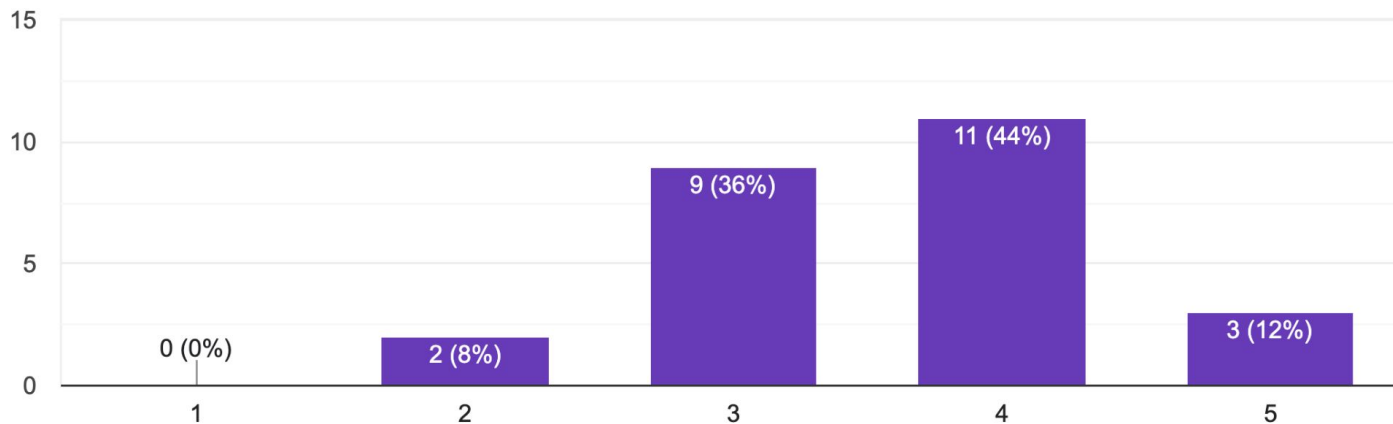
Q: What is your understanding of deficit based language?

- Language referring to people's language practices as deficient, non-standard, and disordered.
- Historically it has been used as a means of oppressing marginalized groups and engendering a sense of inferiority and shame, effectively disconnecting people from their culture.
- Focusing on ways that a person's language usage does not align with the language of power; deficit based approaches fail to recognize the value and strength of a person's language and identity.
- Deficit based models focus on a client's "weaknesses" without acknowledging their strengths and cross-linguistic differences.

Workshop 1 Post-Survey

How has your knowledge of language and power changed as a result of this workshop?

25 responses

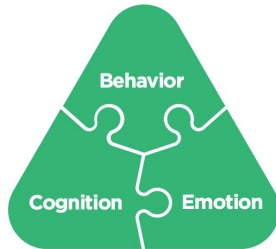


Workshop 1: Language and Power

- Pre- and post-workshop results indicated a positive shift in knowledge of language and power.
- When asked how attendees might see this content on language and power being further incorporated into SLHS courses, attendees had a variety of responses, showing depth of knowledge of the topic.
- The consensus among respondents was that this topic should be integrated into many courses and into a variety of units within those courses, rather than in a standalone course.

Workshop 2: The Roots of Educational Inequities

- Speaker:
 - Dr. Joshuaa Allison-Burbank, Assistant Scientist, Johns Hopkins University Center for Indigenous Health
- Topics: Settler colonialism, racism, trauma, discrimination, and systemic oppressions that contribute to inequities in education.



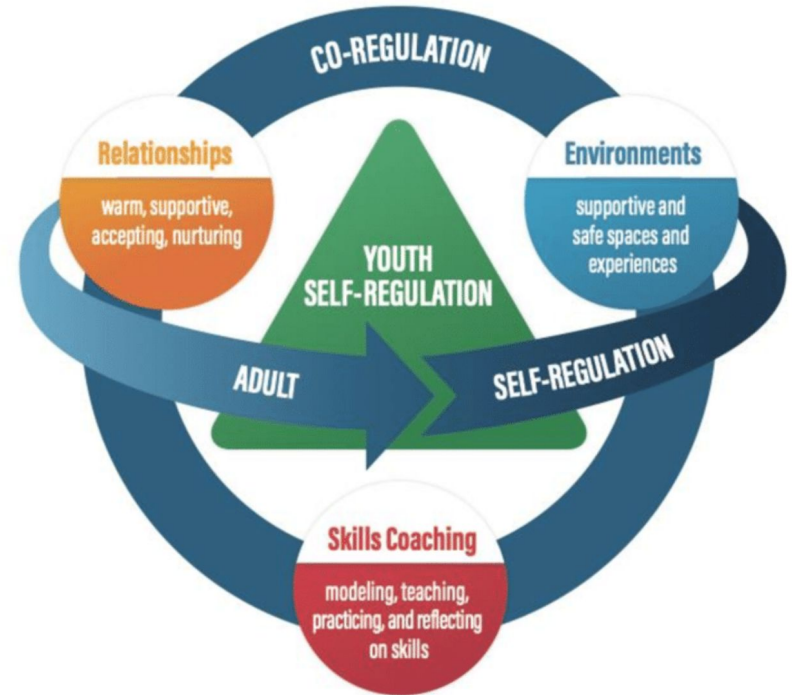
Workshop 2: The Roots of Educational Inequities

Co-regulation: illustrates how notions of best practices ('self-regulation') can reflect broader cultural organization

'Self-regulation' reflects the expectation that individuals are solely responsible for regulation

'Co-regulation' affirms that societies play a role in regulation.

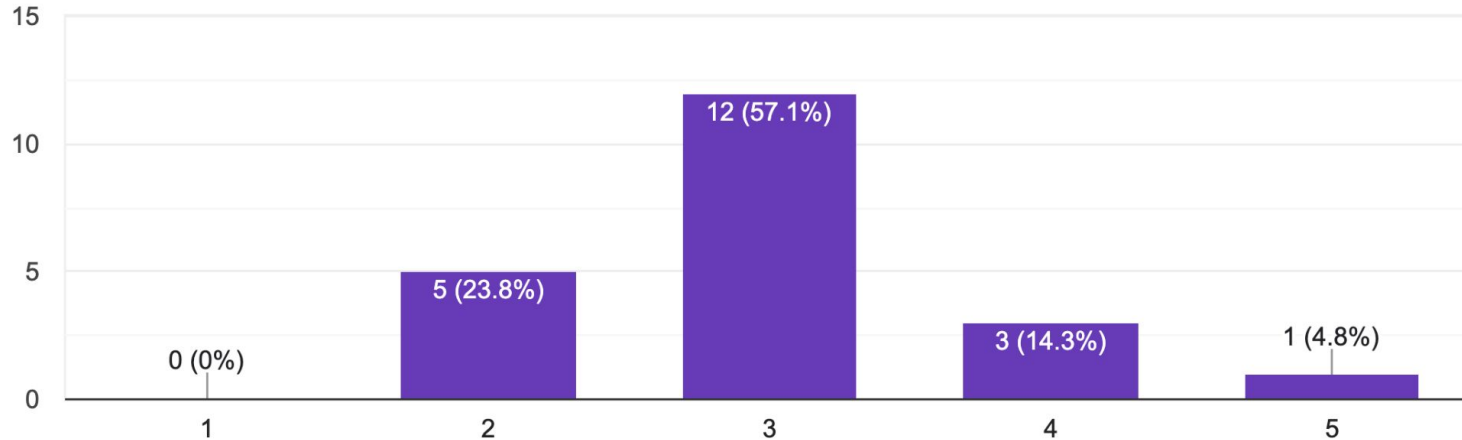
- Warm, nurturing relationships
- Supportive environments
- Coaching and modeling self-regulation skills.



Workshop 2 Pre-Survey

This workshop is on the Roots of Educational Inequities. What is your familiarity with this topic?

21 responses



Workshop 2: Qualitative Data

Q: What is your understanding of zero tolerance policies in schools?

- Often harsh and unnecessary, disproportionately affect certain groups of people, does more harm than good.
- Students are being punished and sent into the punitive systems for very small infractions.
- Zero tolerance policies negatively impact students of color who get expelled at rates much higher than white students.
- These policies are excessively punitive and tend to disproportionately target certain populations.
- Disproportionately impacts BIPOC students
- Expulsion or suspension from school for various behaviors perpetuates the school to prison pipeline

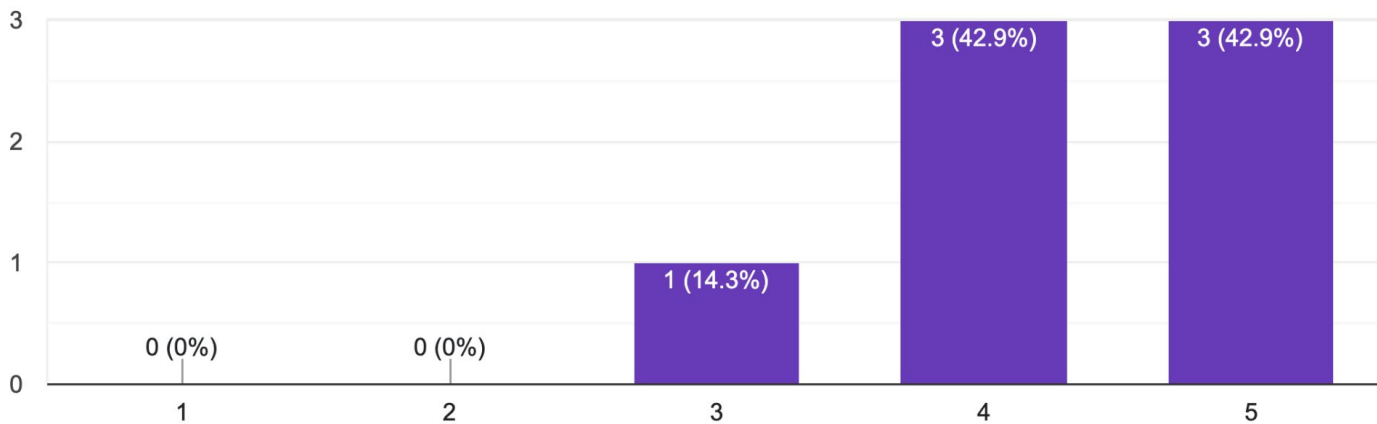
Q: How can Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists within educational settings interrupt the disproportionate occurrence of punitive reactions to behaviors by administrators?

- Focus more upon co-regulation and self regulation strategies that work for students in order to understand their behaviors and help them manage their frustrations
- Treating with a trauma-informed lens
- By stepping in and advocating for our patients
- "I think this is a difficult situation to approach because ultimately speech pathologists working in the schools have little power to make change. Working on self regulation/behaviors is also not the main focus of speech pathologists. [...] As a speech pathologist, you could communicate these thoughts to your administration".

Workshop 2 Post-Survey

How has your knowledge of understanding inequities in education changed as a result of this workshop?

7 responses



Workshop 2: The Roots of Educational Inequities

- Pre- and post-workshop results indicated a dramatic positive shift in knowledge of understanding inequities in education.
- When asked how attendees might see this content on inequities in education being further incorporated into SLHS courses, responses again showed a variety of ideas, but a general consensus that the material should be incorporated into a variety of courses, and a variety of modules within those courses, rather than in a single stand-alone course.

Workshop 3: Language and Social Justice

- Speaker:
 - Dr. RaMonda Horton, Chair,
Department of Communication
Sciences and Disorders, University
of North Carolina, Greensboro
- Topics:
 - Social justice in Speech-Language
Pathology and Audiology



Workshop 3: Language and Social Justice

Theme: Addressed importance of a social justice orientation in the field of CSD.

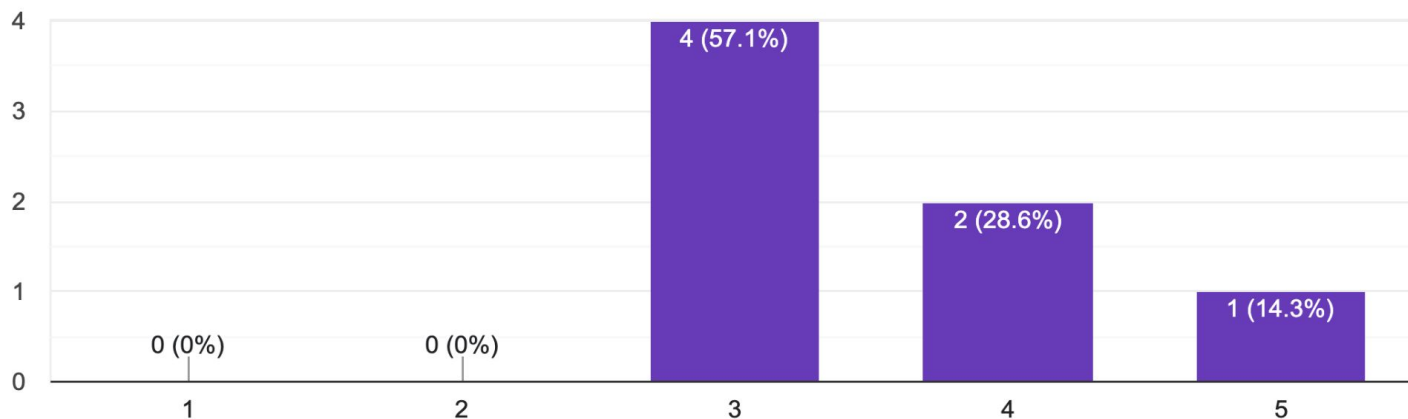
- Discussions on the following:
 - Removing barriers that entire communities face.
 - Structural and systematic racism / abelsim
 - Health disparities in the field of communication sciences and disorders (CSD)



Workshop 3: Pre-Survey

This workshop is about the Critical Perspectives on Social Justice. What is your familiarity with this topic?

7 responses



Workshop 3: Qualitative Data

Q: What is your understanding of a social justice perspective in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology? Address the profession you represent or have an interest in.

- AuD student: More of just an acknowledgment that there are disparities, rather than working to create and promote solutions
- SLP: Thinking critically about how our practice, established largely by white, monolingual women, excludes or minimizes the perspectives of other groups of people // Advocating for clients from marginalized groups // Focusing on equitable assessment across languages and dialects, anti-ableist goals and intervention methods, and incorporating culture and languages into the work we do
- Theoretical linguist: Addressing inequities in access to care by critically examining how theory and ideology underlying popular practices are rooted in historical projects of violence, i.e. colonialism, oralism

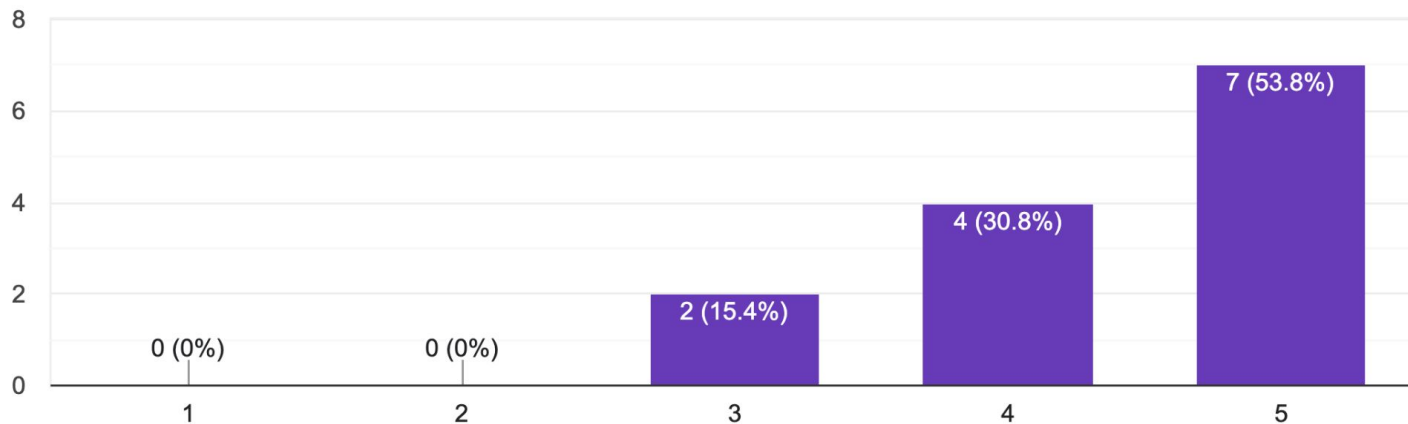
Q: What common practices in SLP/Audiology currently do you think best reflect a social justice mindset?

- Individual practices - When these practices are institutionalized, they tend to lose their intended effect // Identity-focused services that are less prescriptive about the language people are using // Deaf culture and different communication modes
- If we do one thing well, it might be advocating for patients who need services and are unable to afford them
- (Audiology) a lot (but not the majority) have worked to better incorporate ASL as a counseling tool & treatment option & including "subjective measures" (patient interviews and questionnaires) for equitable considerations during clinical practice
- "I haven't entered the field yet so I don't feel that I'm able to speak to what is common practice. I can only speak to what we've been taught is best practice"

Workshop 3: Post-Survey

How has your knowledge of Critical Perspectives on Social Justice changed as a result of this workshop?

13 responses



Workshop 3: Language and Social Justice

- Pre- and post-workshop results indicated a dramatic and strong positive shift in knowledge of critical perspective on social justice.
- The attendees felt strongly that these topics should be covered in a variety of courses, and in a variety of units within these courses.
- Comments from that survey show considerable buy-in from the participants in addressing issues of social justice in courses where it is not traditionally covered. For example, "I agree with [...] including it as a foundation of our clinical practices rather than a topic to be discussed in addition to the practices. We should all go into clinic with this mindset, so incorporating it into classes that may seem 'irrelevant' in regards to social justice [...] could be beneficial."

Today's Roadmap

Marker 1

Identifying the
Problem

Marker 3

Workshops

Marker 4

Examples of
Curricular
Changes

Marker 2

Formulating a
Plan

Curricular Changes

- SLHS 8500: Preparing Culturally Responsive Practitioners
- Taken by all students in SLP and AUD
- 2-credit mostly asynchronous course
- Five modules
 - Language and Culture
 - Linguistic Diversity
 - Gender and Sexuality
 - Race and Privilege
 - Disability and Ableism
- Currently being revised, aspire to make it freely available

Preparation for Neurodiversity Lecture

- Award recipient of the 2023 ASHA SPARC award
 - Teaching Plan: Develop skills in preparing and delivering a class lecture (SLHS 3305).
- Outline of Lecture
 - Definitions of Neurodiversity, Neurodiversity Paradigm, and the Neurodiversity Movement
 - Discussed disability affirming language
 - Identity first & Person first language
 - Discussions on the medical and social models of disability
 - Discussions of traditional autism research and responses from autistics communities
 - Identifying and disrupting deficit thinking and deficit-based language

Speech Science Implementation

- Students were assigned a writing exercise that targeted recognizing deficit language and disability-affirming language.
 - Students reviewed the article “Arrested Development of Audiovisual Speech Perception in Autism Spectrum Disorders” and were tasked to locate language that is not disability affirming from this article.
 - Then students rewrote three statements in this article with disability-affirming language.
 - The goal was for students to identify and disrupt deficit thinking and deficit-based language in writing and interpretation of research.

BRIEF REPORT

Brief Report: Arrested Development of Audiovisual Speech Perception in Autism Spectrum Disorders

Speech Science Implementation

- Speech science laboratory assignment on gender and speech that used a public corpus of transmasculine speech (Dolquist & Munson, 2024). the Palette of Voices.
 - Corpus includes a variety of men and masculine-presenting people, including transgender men, cisgender men, and transmasculine nonbinary people.
 - The project was completed by Devin Dolquist as part of his 2023 M.A. thesis in speech-language pathology, advised by Munson.

Materials available at
<https://z.umn.edu/pov-hwk>
and at this QR code:



Today's Roadmap

Marker 1

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Lessons
Learned

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Lessons Learned

- As a department, we brainstormed '***awareness, integration, and action***' as the way forward to continue teaching what we know best and taking on the responsibility of learning and implementing new material as society changes.

Awareness involves recognizing the history of violence that marginalized communities have suffered and continue to endure.

- Additionally, it entails comprehending the frameworks that have shaped SLP and AUD practices, including those rooted in colonial ideologies, ableism, whiteness, and racism.

Integration can include educators and students questioning and confronting their own positionalities.

- This process also involves recognizing and addressing harmful ideologies that are present in curriculum and clinical materials.



Action Ideas for Our Program



- Continual offer opportunities (and incentives) for faculty to advance their perspective and attitudes toward social justice:
 - UMN Equity Certificate Hosted Online (ECHO)
 - Complete our 8500 modules
 - Department DEI bookclub: Ramonda Horton's *Critical Perspective on Social Justice in Speech-Language Pathology*
- Continually considering how social justice can be further addressed and integrated within and across courses.
 - Peer Review of Teaching
 - Course: Communication Disorders and Neurodiversity
 - Restructuring program courses and requirements to increase accessibility

Attendee Input and Questions

What does awareness, integration, and action, look like for you in your clinical practice, department, and within the curriculum changes you contribute to?

Examples:

- Supporting and amplifying the voices of marginalized communities.
- Incorporating critical race theory and intersectionality frameworks into coursework and clinical training.
- Integrating content related to social determinants of health, health equity, and health disparities into coursework and clinical training
- Creating opportunities for students to engage in learning that centers the voices and needs of marginalized communities.



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