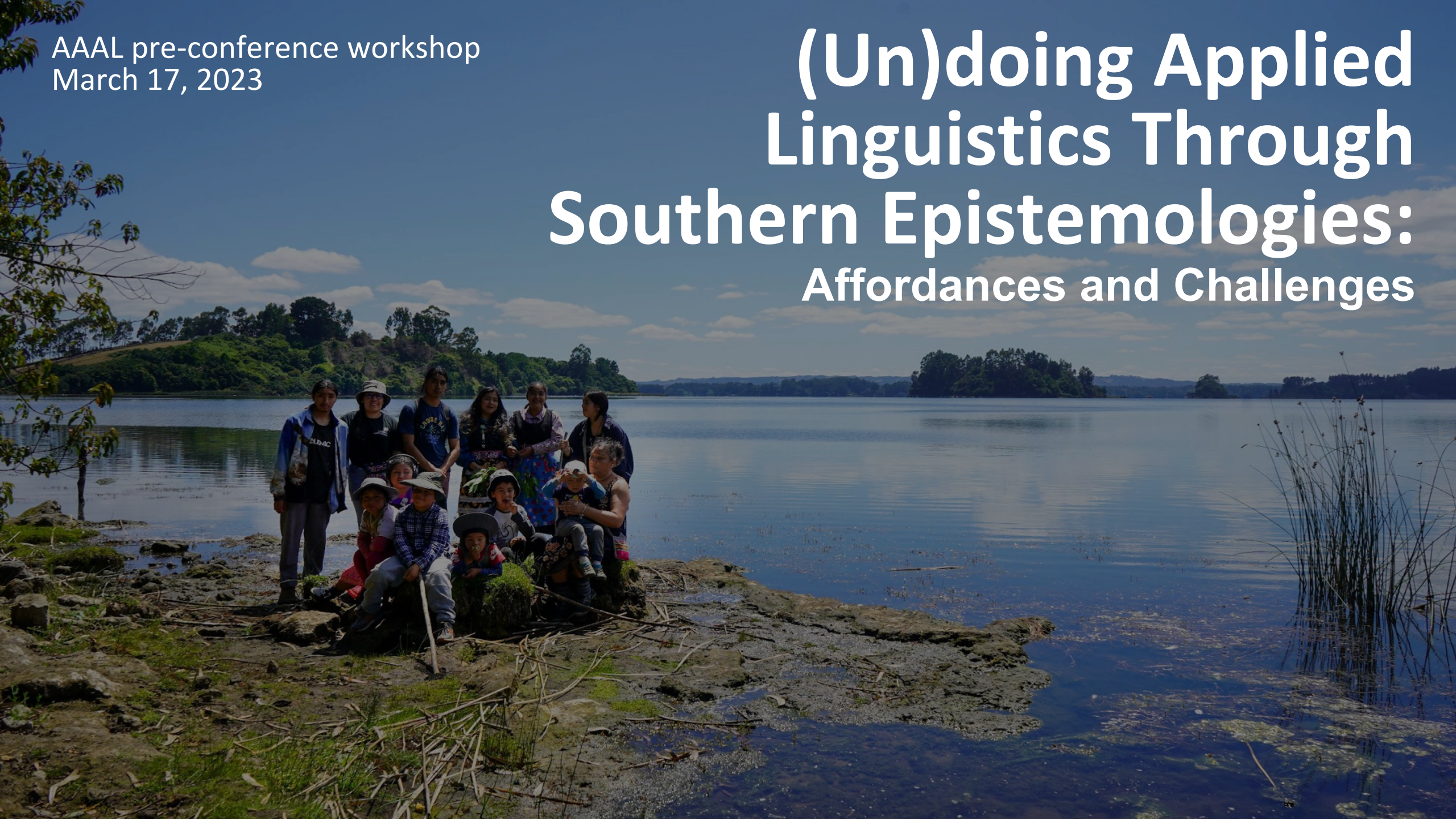


AAAL pre-conference workshop
March 17, 2023

(Un)doing Applied Linguistics Through Southern Epistemologies: Affordances and Challenges



Land Acknowledgement

Portland State University is located in downtown Portland, Oregon in Multnomah County. We honor the Indigenous people whose traditional and ancestral homelands we stand on: the Multnomah, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Tumwater, Watlala bands of the Chinook, the Tualatin Kalapuya, and many other Indigenous nations of the Columbia River. Before colonization by European-American settlers, the region was home to at least 7 language families and between 25-35 languages. The peoples who spoke these languages were forced to surrender their lands and languages by the settlers. Only 9 tribal languages are spoken today. It is important that we acknowledge the ancestors of this place and recognize that we are here because of the sacrifices forced upon them. In remembering these communities and this history, we honor their legacy, lives, and their descendants.

Image from: Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde. (2019). 10th grade curriculum.





Tuxámshish, Dr. Virginia Beavert



Agenda

Part 1

Philosophical accounts of Southern epistemologies

Part 2

Southernizing approaches to language

Part 3

Methodological (un)doing of “collecting data” versus “creating artifacts”

Part 4

Southernizing the teaching of applied linguistics



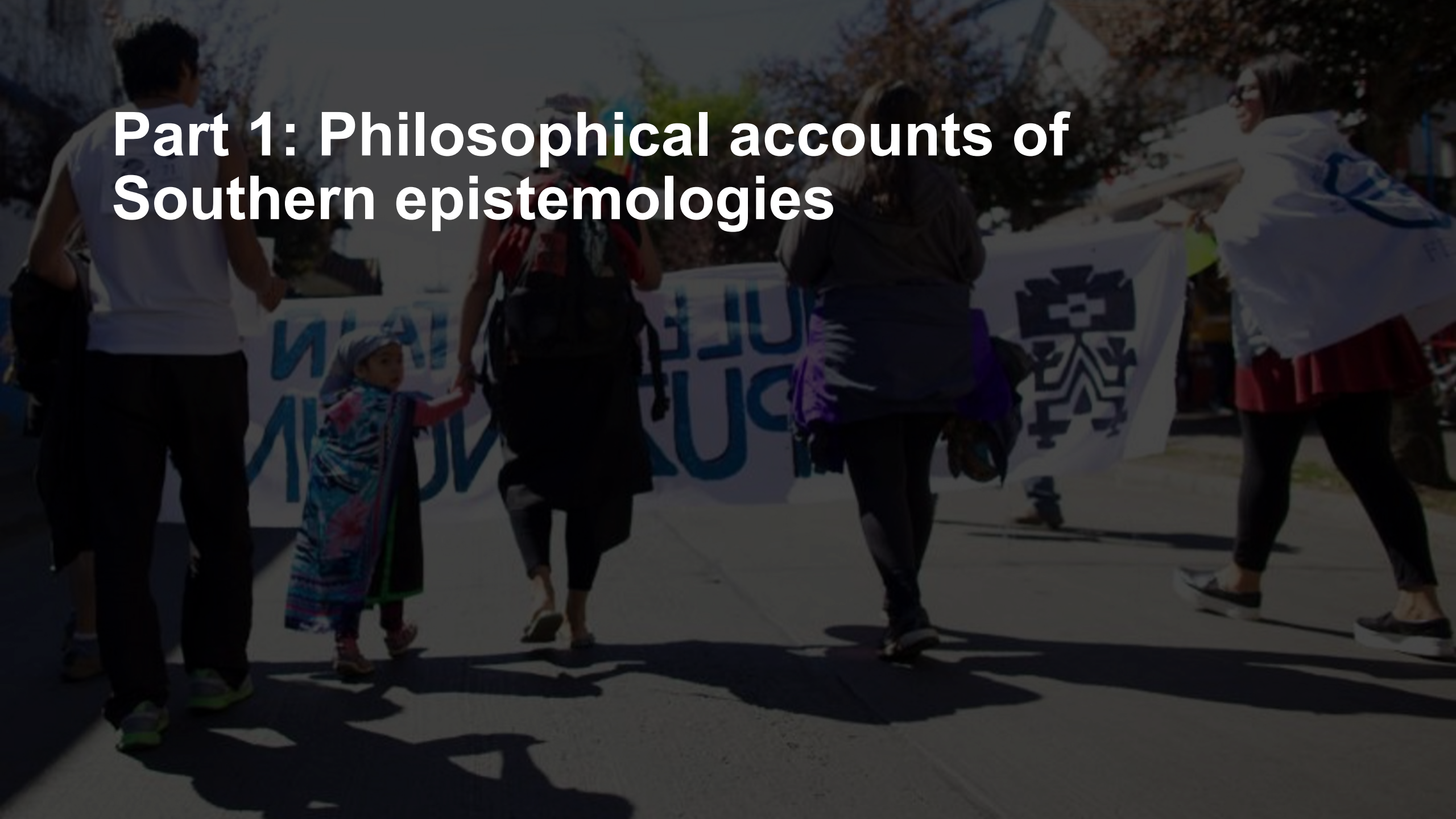
Introductions & Expectations

- Sinfree Makoni
- Magdalena Madany-Saá
- Rafael Lomeu Gomes
- Mfundo Jabulani Msimango
- Kelly Baur
- Silvia Calfuqueo Lefio
- Caro Kürüf Poblete
- Jason Litzenberg
- Alissa Hartig

The background of the slide is a dark gray color. It is filled with several black silhouettes of dancers in various dynamic and expressive poses. Some dancers are in mid-air, while others are in low, grounded stances. The poses are diverse, capturing different moments of movement and energy. The overall composition is energetic and artistic.

Framing the Discussion

Part 1: Philosophical accounts of Southern epistemologies



Jean & John Comaroff (2012) *Theory from the South, Or, How Euro-America is Evolving toward Africa*

- ‘Old margins’ are ‘new frontiers’ of knowledge production: dismantle modern social thought by relocating traditions of theory-making
- Theory from the South (Theory from the Margins) is “ex-centric” (Homi Bhabha, 1994)
- Former colonial peripheries offer new relations and insights about the global order while the North is taking on features associated with postcolonial (precarity, violence, corruption, etc).
- Scholars from the North see Southern theorists as informants - theorists from ex-centric locations should be ready to assert the value of their own ideas that don't necessarily emerge from the academy, but from the world of practice.
- Theory-making must be multilateral rather than pluriversal.

Boaventura de Souza Santos (2015) *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide.*

- Hegelian paradigm - Marxist paradigm - Epistemologies of the South paradigm
- There is no global social justice without global cognitive justice
- The understanding of the world exceeds the Western understanding of the world
- Matrix of domination (colonialism - racialization, patriarchy-sexualized bodies, capitalism - is sustained by both)
- Ecology of knowledges instead of dialogue of knowledges – zones of incommunicability, of incommensurability, but also zones of interaction – this is where knowledges are transformed

Walter Dignolo & Catherine Walsh (2018)

On Decoloniality

- Colonial matrix of power (CMP): “Coloniality is not over. It’s all over.”
- Theorization coming from praxis: shared battles against the still-present CMP and for something else (decoloniality for).
- Unlearn and relearn: our own decolonization
- Thinking from and with, instead of studying about
- Understanding the mechanisms/terms of modernity/coloniality that regulate all public spheres (academia being just one of them)
- Decolonial tasks: understanding coloniality and colonial wounds to heal
- How to sow life in these times of death, how to plant re-existence in these times of de-existence? By Making fissures or cracks in both rural and urban spaces today, enabling some hope and cultivating local spaces and forms of re-existence

Molefi Asante - Afrocentricity

- *Asante argues that “There is a **profound problem in knowledge**, and in not just knowledge production but in our understanding of ourselves as homo sapiens” (GVF, 2021). “We know that homo sapiens have been around about 300,000 years. What happened to homo sapiens during the 230,000 years that homo sapiens lived on the continent of Africa? I mean, what were people thinking about? What did they do? How did they form societies and relationships? Who established ideas of kinship? Who looked at the stars and named them? Who domesticated the cow? Who first decided how to forge a stream and to go across a river?” (GVF, 2021). “Certainly, you do not raise any question about knowledge before Homer and the Greeks. And, if you give Homer a date around 800 BCE, before the Christian era, then as an African scholar and an Afrocentrist you ask the question: what happened before 800 BCE?—I mean, the Pyramids were completed around 2600 BCE! (GVF, 2021).*
- Asante argues that **human knowledge**, as it is commonly understood, is a '**truncated knowledge** that begins with Homer. He introduces the concept of **Afrocentricity** to challenge this limited view of human history. There is little known about the production of knowledge before Homer, but Africa has contributed significantly to world knowledge, including Imhotep's role as the first Black architect of the first pyramid and Inzalo y'Langa, the oldest human construction on Earth, located in Mpumalanga.



What is Afrocentricity?



- **Afrocentricity** is a theoretical idea that emphasizes the need for African people to view the world from their own historical narrative and experiences, as they have been historically marginalized and put on the periphery of Europe. The central tenet of Afrocentricity is to interrogate every phenomenon with the question of the role and centrality of African people in it. It is both a theory and a practice that involves applying Afrocentric principles to center education and values in African history and culture. The aim of Afrocentricity is to re-center African people in their own historical realities.

Afrocentricity challenges The racial ladder, prehistoric, Postcolonialism and Postmodernism

- **Racial ladder-** one of the factors that perpetuates coloniality is the imposition of ranking on humans. According to Asante. Afrocentricity aids us to challenge ‘the racial ladder.’ and oppression which are part of the European project. The racial ladder in which white man are at the top and Black women lower than Black men. In short, the racial ladder must be destroyed because it distorts homo sapiens’ reality (Africa never ranked human beings).
- **Afrocentricity** also challenges the categorization of history into **prehistoric** because it is Western-centric. According to Asante, “prehistoric” denotes an idea that “let’s not go there”The term "**prehistoric**" poses a number of problems, including the possibility that it could cause the analyst to ignore or reject the contribution of Africans. In South Africa and Zimbabwe, for instance, there is a ton of writing in numerous caves and under ledges.
- **Post colonialism and Post modernism-** Asante believes that the notion of postcolonialism is inappropriate because we are not postcolonial. We have not gone beyond colonialism. **We are not post anything.** Infact, we still have the same **hegemonic system that is inherently exclusive.** Therefore, neither postmodernism nor postcolonialism can successfully challenge coloniality; **They both require Afrocentricity.**

Jigsaw Activity



Groups for Jigsaw Activity

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6
Meike Wernicke	Brian King	Isabel Martin	Malba Barahona	Jennifer Akins	Latisha Mary
Pia Lane	Minh Salzmänn-Hoang	Sibusiwé Dube	Aya Hayasaki	Pedro dos Santos	Neha Arora
James Wells	Andrea Sterzuk	Amanda Baker	Yixi Qiu	Hui Zhang	Pedro Bastos
Muhammad Shahbaz	Yetunde Alabede	Abu Rafi	Carol Suhr	Li Peng	Juexuan Lu
Anna Brezgis	J. Andres Ramirez	Noah Veloz	Anna A Alsufieva	Gloria Park	Scarlett Mannish
Mark Wyatt	Michol Miller	Renee Figuera	Mario Lopez-Gopar	Katherine Masters	Kimberley Brown

A globe with a colorful, abstract pattern overlaid on it, representing a synthesis of different cultures or ideas. The pattern consists of various geometric shapes, lines, and colors like red, green, yellow, and blue, creating a complex, interconnected design. The globe is set against a blue background with a bright light source on the right side, creating a lens flare effect.

Conclusion & Synthesis for Part 1

Anisa Caine (2022)



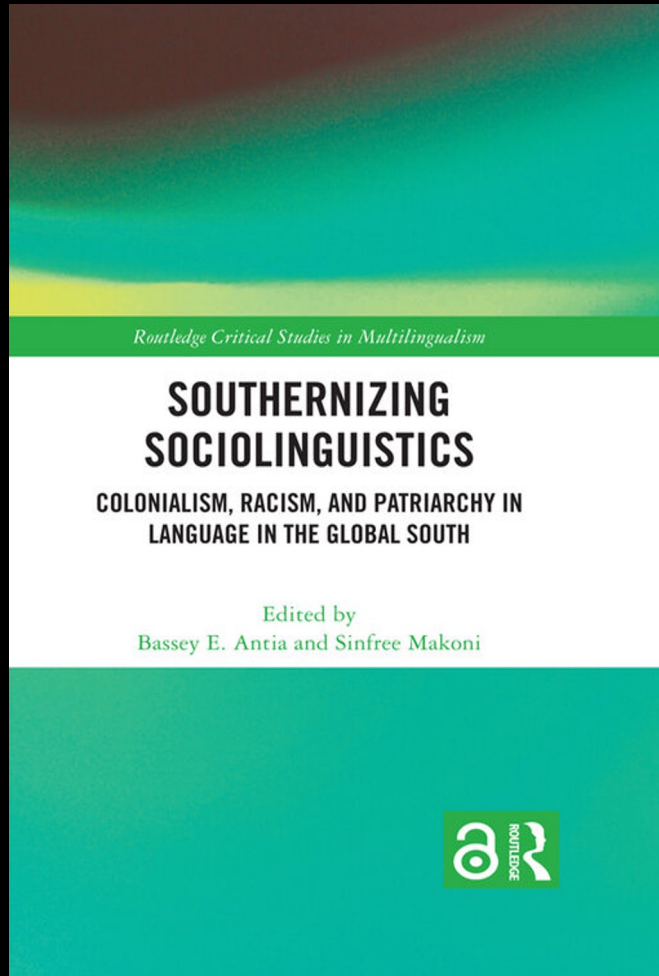
IMAGINE

Part 2: Southernizing approaches to language

Dread Scott
Imagine a World
Without America
(2007), Screenprint on
canvas, 75" x 75".

A WORLD

Southernizing Critical Discourse Studies



Lomeu Gomes & Svendsen (2022)

Production and
contestation of the
abyssal line in
Norwegian media



Mário Vitória
Amado imaginário, 2012
acrylic on canvas, 100 x 75cm

Examples of Language Revitalization

Rural primary school “Kom pu lof ñi kimeltuwe”



Film and Communication School of the Ayllarewe Budi



Language Revitalization Through Games & Sports

**Formal settings
(universities & schools)**

**Informal settings
& in the community**



sumak kawsay in education

Ecology of knowledges in Ecuador: internationalization and interculturality

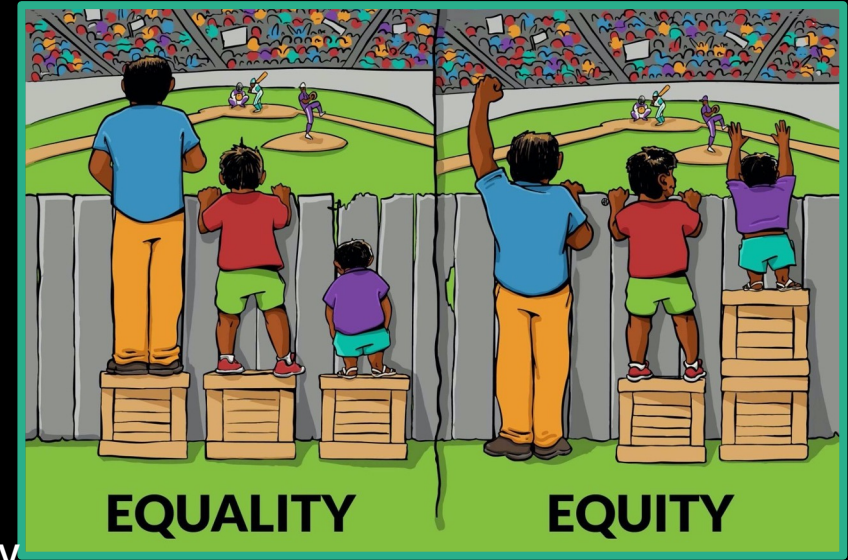


An inherently colonial endeavor: English Language Teaching

A language with a traceable colonial history that continues to be realized through modern structures of global knowledge distribution and as a resource for socioeconomic mobility

Instruction	Discipline	Profession	Business	Service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Post-Truth pedagogies ● Indigenous pedagogies, ● Ecolinguistics ● CRT ● Raciolinguistics ● Feminist Studies ● Queer Studies ● etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Types of research questions being asked ● Relationship to pre-service training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ethical employment practices (beyond professional organizations/ accreditation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Program stability ● Mission statements & strategic plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting students throughout careers at institution
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid aggressive student recruitment practices 	

From inclusion to transformation to decolonisation (Arshad, R (2020): The Rhodes must fall movement in South Africa



- The ideas of inclusivity and transformation in South African universities are not sufficient to fully reverse the impacts of colonization.
- Historically white-only institutions of higher learning such as the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and the University of Cape Town (UCT) have implemented affirmative action policies introduced by the African National Congress (ANC) government. These policies are grounded on the principles of inclusivity and transformation, and aimed to promote greater diversity and inclusivity in their student bodies and faculty.
- Inclusivity and transformation policies were mainly concerned with the issues of access and discrimination.
- Subsequently, in 2015, there was a call to decolonize these institutions: The fees must fall movement
- Decolonization in South Africa involves restoring land to Black South Africans, promoting African languages and culture, addressing economic imbalances, recognizing contributions of marginalized groups, fostering an inclusive national identity, and creating a more just society for future generations.



Think-Pair-Share

- If you've already worked with these concepts, how do they show up in your work? What do they contribute to the work you do? Are there any concepts presented today that you haven't used that you'd like to explore? How would your work look different through the lens of this new conceptual framework?
- If you haven't already worked with these concepts, what would it mean to reimagine the problems you are working on through a Southern lens?



Part 3: Methodological (un)doing of “collecting data” versus “creating artifacts”


Linda Tuhiwai Smith's work

- Indigenous communities around the world continue suffering and being excluded yet they are the most researched people in the world
- Dual responsibility of indigenous/people of color researchers: critiquing and contesting Western ideologies but also having the credibility to work with other knowledges
- There is no theory of methodology of everything - being indigenous or colonized do not mean the same for all people
- Decolonizing academic institutions is a global struggle against a racist system (e.g publishing processes)
- Being an indigenous woman in New Zealand - contesting the white feminism
- Critique of critical theories
- Kaupapa Māori approach: an approach to research by Māori, for Māori and with Māori: can one carry out Kaupapa research even when you are not a Maori?



Smith, L. T. (2015)

Kaupapa Māori research-some kaupapa Māori principles



Tensions between institutional ethics guidelines and work through Southern lenses

Elmgreen & Dragset
Dilemma, 2012
photo: Rafael Lomeu Gomes



What are the benefits of research to participants?

- Participants as co-authors, treated equally as any other scholarly authority
- Role of power relations and co-construction of knowledge
- Member checking still positions researcher as the controller of knowledge
- Connection with documentary film-making and issues with anonymity
- From language description - descriptions of languages written by non-native speakers, the authority on the language is the non-native speaker who has limited understanding of what's happening and fits the language into a familiar grid/model

Reflections and possible solutions

Nduna et al (2022)

-**Ethical imperatives** - How to promote wellbeing of communities in which research is conducted.

-**Moral imperatives**: How to treat participants and their stories and how to enrich their lives?

-“epistemic violence” (Chilisa & Mertens, 2021) : How to empower the agency of participants?

Weiss and McGranahan (2021)

-Why do we use pseudonyms? “I don’t know. We’ve just always done it this way.”

-The Q is not HOW but WHY. The use of **pseudonyms is not a neutral technique**

-Who requests anonymity for ethnographic research participants?

-Ethics we use in our research vs ethics we perform for bureaucracies

-Who is a colleague and who is a research subject?

-What claims can we make using pseudonyms that we cannot make with real names and vice versa?



Part 4: Southernizing the teaching of applied linguistics

Key Points of Nick Reimer's Presentation:



- Ideas about language are already political. The way that we approach language intellectually is a product of politics. Why is linguistics unwilling to contemplate its own ideological and political properties? Is there a single underlying representation of the canonical core subdisciplines of linguistics?
- Undergraduate education is the most significant side of the ideological work that linguistics accomplishes:
 - Linguistic theory is essentially presented to students as scientific (western ethnocentrism) - however the linguistics teacher isn't accountable for their choices of theoretical framework, for which they are likely to nevertheless make unequivocal claims of scientificity. "This exercise of arbitrary discretionary authority that is modeled for students in the linguistics classroom is the most important ideological consequence of linguistics. Its effect is to habituate students to a certain exercise of arbitrary symbolic power"
 - Undergraduate instruction is around problem sets: students are required to undertake concrete analysis of particular circumscribed data sets in a rule-governed way - despite competing accounts of what the best analysis of a particular empirical linguistic phenomenon

What is the knowledge base?

- What is the critical knowledge base of being an applied linguist?
Should there be one?
- Consider your own institution:
 - What are the required courses for an undergraduate minor/major? Masters? PhD?
 - What content is covered?
 - What kinds of assignments and assessments are used?
 - What is the nature of language as it's represented?
 - What theoretical perspectives are addressed/ not addressed?
- What is the impact of these courses on how students understand language, ways of orienting to authority?



PhD in Applied Linguistics @ Penn State

Courses required for PhD students

- APLNG 580 – Proseminar in Applied Linguistics
- APLNG 582 – Seminar in Approaches to Language in Use (or equivalent)
- APLNG 591 – Seminar in Second Language Acquisition (or equivalent)
- APLNG 577 – Language Analysis
- APLNG 593 – Experimental Research on Language
- + Two additional methods courses
- + 18 credits from, e.g., Health & Aging in Multilingual Contexts; World Englishes; Language Ideology; Sociocultural Theory & L2 Learning; Seminar in Applied Corpus Linguistics; Methods of Language Assessment; etc



Initial Observations

- Theoretical perspectives/ linguistics models
 - Arbitrary or faculty preference, but why that approach? → can be disorienting for students
- Data problems
 - Suggests that there is a single “correct” answer/ approach/ analysis → promotes bureaucratic mindset & deferrals to authority

Is it possible that there might be some intended adverse effects/collateral damage from the teaching of linguistics? If so, what are they?

The knowledge base of your curriculum

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/16dCx9t5j576313a2FqLveKjFR3EVRC9xZhaUJNLvUn8/edit?usp=sharing>

shorturl.at/ekxK6



Discussion & Synthesis

What would be the one thing that you are already unlearning or that you would like to unlearn or relearn from applied linguistics?

- What Ecology of Knowledges support the curriculum?
- Does the curriculum dismantle modern social thought? Does the curriculum relocate traditions of theory-making?
- What are “the cracks”?
- How can undergraduate/ graduate instruction in linguistics be reimagined?
- What would a reimagined syllabus look like?
- How could technology be used to de/reconstruct?
- How can students' perspectives be included in rethinking "linguistics for what"?



Conclusions and What's Next?



Calls to Action

- What can you do this week?
 - AAAL Business Meeting and Resolution on multilingualism (Monday 3/20 @ 12:30-1:45 pm in Mt. Hood room - 2nd floor)
- What can you do this month?
 - Get feedback from your students (moves toward collaborative processes)
- What can you do this year?
 - Resource redistribution – through honorariums and events
 - Organize a speaking tour/event (email Kelly at Kbaur@asu.edu)
- What can you do over the next 5 years?
 - Get on the IRB and push for change