**Centre for Language and Social Justice Research**

**Semester 1 Events Programme 2024-25**

**World Mental Health Day: Mental Suffering from Language Learning – The Causes and Effects**

*Dr Yeji Han (York St John University), Changyung Kim (Chungnam National University College of Medication, South Korea) and Bolim Lee (Chungnam National University College of Medication, South Korea)*

*9 October 2024 4:30-5:30 Creative Centre recital room (followed by reception/refreshments from 5.30-6.30 in the Creative Centre 2nd floor atrium)*

Abstract

Learning a foreign language often brings significant stress due to various reasons such as exam pressure, communication difficulties, and peer comparison. This presentation will focus on one key source of mental strain for students:  the high expectations students place on themselves and those imposed by others.

In my research (Han, 2024), I empirically investigated the gap between students’ perceived current state and their desired future as a result of the language learning. The findings showed that the wider the gap, the more likely students are to experience anxiety and depression during their language learning journey.

This talk will be divided into two parts. The first section will introduce the theoretical framework and research that shed light on mental distress in language learning. The second part will focus on a specific context where English education is fiercely competitive and stressful. Two undergraduate students from South Korea, Changyoung Kim and Bolim Lee, will join online to share their experiences of learning English during their school years. The presentation will conclude with a Q/A session, followed by refreshments and networking.

[Mental Suffering from Language Learning: The Causes and Effects Tickets, Wed, Oct 9, 2024 at 4:30 PM | Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/mental-suffering-from-language-learning-the-causes-and-effects-tickets-1014381190447?aff=ebdssbdestsearch)

**Linguistic Justice as a Matter of Life and Death (online webinar for Autistic Speaking Day)**

*Dr Gerald Roche (LaTrobe University, Australia)*

*6 November 2024 10.00-12.00 (Zoom webinar)*

Abstract

This talk will introduce what I call a necropolitical approach to language, which explores how people’s positions within linguistic hierarchies sometimes places them at an increased risk of premature death. I’ll describe how I developed this approach through my research into the politics of language oppression in Tibet, which I first began nearly twenty years ago. I will also introduce the broader theoretical framework that I developed to better understand this situation, based on Michel Foucault’s concept of biopolitics (the politics of life) and its later development by Achille Mbembe into the concept of necropolitics (the politics of death). Having described the development of this approach that links language and death, I will then discuss how I suddenly found my own research uncomfortably relevant to my own life, when I learned that I was autistic. In this section of the talk, I will consider the potential role played by language in contributing to the high rates of premature death found among the autistic population. In concluding the talk, I will argue that linguistic justice should be a central consideration of any theory, social movement, or policy that works towards achieving biopolitical equality, where everyone can live equally long, rich lives.

Presenter bio

Gerald Roche is Associate Professor of Politics at La Trobe University, Australia. He is a political anthropologist, and carries out research on state violence and the social movements that resist it. His publications have appeared in *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *Patterns of Prejudice, State Crime Journal* and many other venues, and his book *The Politics of Language Oppression in Tibet* will be published by Cornell University Press in November 2024. He also edited the *Routledge Handbook of Language Revitalization*.

[https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/linguistic-justice-as-a-matter-of-life-and-death-webinar-tickets-981644102937?aff=oddtdtcreator](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eventbrite.co.uk%2Fe%2Flinguistic-justice-as-a-matter-of-life-and-death-webinar-tickets-981644102937%3Faff%3Doddtdtcreator&data=05%7C02%7Ch.sauntson%40yorksj.ac.uk%7C8d17dfa761d1463fc0e808dcc0269162%7C5c8ae38ef85b4309b7ec862815a37aee%7C0%7C0%7C638596519113713631%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=usjzS73qTRmf5%2B5SSu80z2zFdQz7x6KWso9bJ5V%2FPP8%3D&reserved=0)