

The water that surrounds us and the infusion of EDID in linguistic research



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“Following up on her roundtable presentation at the last meeting of the CLA, Professor D'Arcy will be facilitating a discussion of EDID in linguistic research, with a focus on implications for teaching and theory, alongside discussion of considerations for reappointment, tenure and promotion cases.”

CLA presentation

- recognition of the ways in which privilege (and therefore, colonialism and EuroAmerican epistemology and ontology) shape linguistics
 - decolonizing and Indigenizing praxis (theory, curriculum, methods)
 - reflecting critically on how the history of the field shapes our assumptions about what we do, why we do it, how we do it, and who we do it for, including explicit reflection of who the 'we' is [and who 'we' has not been] ("science" is not neutral)
 - building anti-racist and inclusive pedagogy
 - including with intention inclusive language practices (examples, theory)
 - acknowledging erasure/harm/gaps/shortcomings in theory (e.g. WEIRD languages) and labels of language practices and language users (including language modalities)
 - uniting on RPT standards and definitions of excellence which support Canadian linguistics in getting to a shared vision of where we want to be & what we want it to be
- summary: EDID is not only about how we do linguistics, or teach linguistics, but is also about how we develop theory and decide what is and isn't a perspective we value, as a field

CLA presentation

Who am I?

What
are my
respon-
sibili-
ties?

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I am not an EDID expert.

There are these two young fish swimming along and they happen to meet an older fish swimming the other way, who nods at them and says ‘Morning. How’s the water?’ And the two young fish swim on for a bit, and then eventually one of them looks over at the other and goes ‘What the hell is water?’

David Foster Wallace

“The CLA is committed to infusing the principles of equity, inclusion, diversity, and decolonization into all of its activities.”

“As sociological research has demonstrated, **institutional whiteness is a structuring force in academia**, informing the development of theories, methods, and models in ways that reproduce racism and white supremacy as structural social processes rather than simply acts of individual ill will.”

Charity Hudley, Mallinson & Bucholtz (2020:e201)

We must, as a field, acknowledge that the same is true in linguistics writ large, and as such, in Canadian linguistics specifically, before we can begin to meet our commitment.

What is research?

- What counts? Who does it count for? What does it count for? What's in? What's not in? Who do we do it for? Who even is 'we'? Who's a linguist? Who is the expert? Who gets to publish, and where? Etc.
- Defining **research** is a key starting point for thinking about EDID in 'linguistics research.'

... not an EDID expert. Who am I? Responsibilities?

- 4th generation settler & uninvited guest on lək'wəŋən territory
 - white + cisgender + straight, woman
 - sort of first-gen, mostly not
 - variationist, generativist-trained/theoretically open-minded
 - graduate-trained + tenured + full professor
 - instructor, supervisor, mentor, one-over
 - (co-) editor, peer reviewer
 - administrator, com. member, senate chair, SSHRC rep, HSS Fed rep
- confer privilege, and thus duty of care and the need to reflect critically on all that I do, think, write, etc.

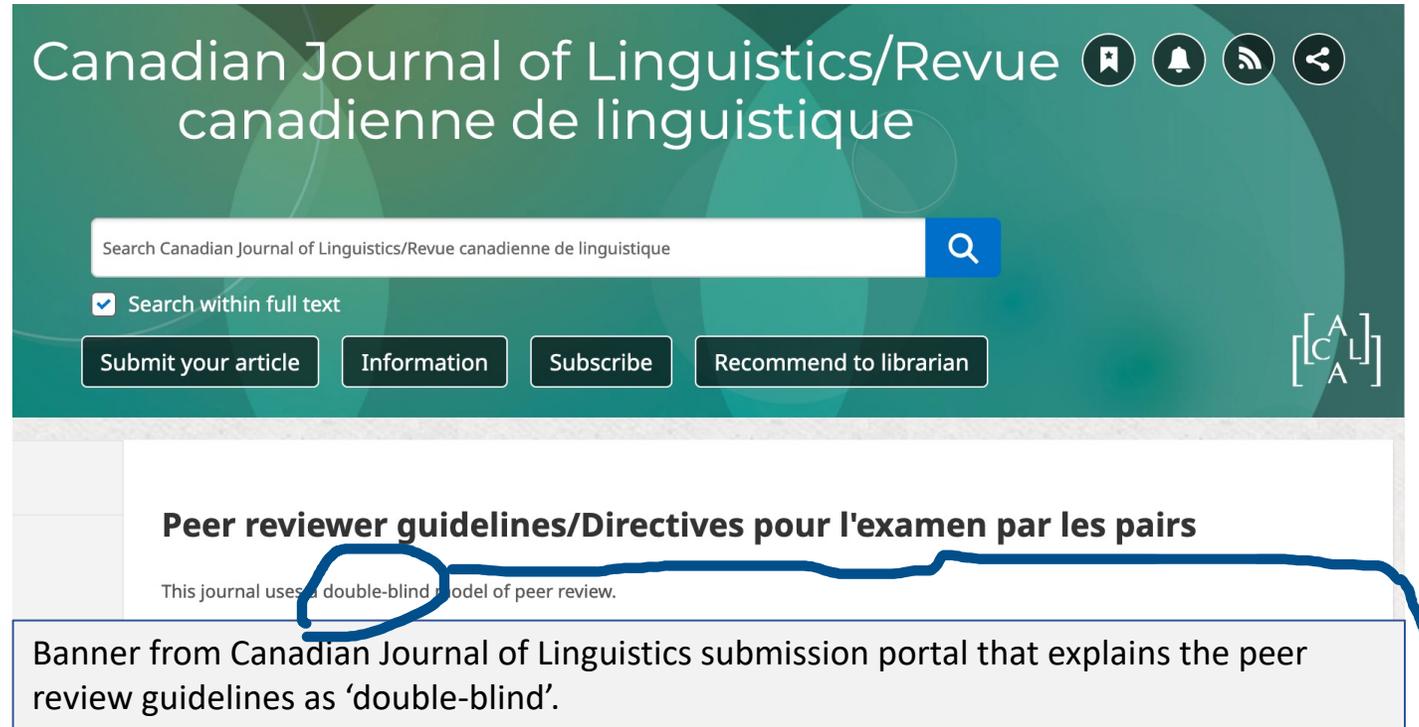
EDID is not strictly a moral or pedagogical or social justice imperative. It is all of these things. But it is also an empirical imperative, a descriptive imperative, and a theoretical imperative.

Gender & Sexuality

- ensure none of our research or other documentation (chapter, journal, article, text, presentation + policy, process, practice, procedure, form, etc.) enforces a binary
 - use *they*, not *he or she*, *his or her*, *he/she*, *his/hers*
 - omit reference to 'both sexes' or 'both genders' in general claims and statements
- avoid 'male' and 'female' when what is meant is 'man' or 'woman' (and recognize that these terms are not coterminous)
- recognize that assumptions of binary sex and binary gender are cultural and epistemological, not biological (sex) or universal (gender)
- include gender neutral honorifics on journal submission portals (e.g., Mx) (and remember that the option to not use an honorific can reflect privilege and power, e.g., in the classroom)
- include non-binary genders and non-heteronormative sexualities in examples, stimuli, theory, etc.

Ableism

- avoid ableist language
- recognize ableist assumptions of field, e.g., phonocentrism
- hold meetings in accessible locations; provide ASL or other supports; provide alt-text when using images
- build accessibility and elements of universal design into research, presentations & course syllabi from the outset



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Canadian Journal of Linguistics website. The header includes the journal's name in English and French, a search bar, and social media icons. Below the header is a navigation menu with buttons for 'Submit your article', 'Information', 'Subscribe', and 'Recommend to librarian'. The main content area features a section titled 'Peer reviewer guidelines/Directives pour l'examen par les pairs'. A blue circle highlights the text 'This journal uses a double-blind model of peer review.' in the original image. A blue arrow points from this highlighted text to the explanatory text below the screenshot.

Peer reviewer guidelines/Directives pour l'examen par les pairs

This journal uses a double-blind model of peer review.

Banner from Canadian Journal of Linguistics submission portal that explains the peer review guidelines as 'double-blind'.

double-blind > double-anonymized

but also:

speaker > language user, etc.

Indigenization, Decolonization, Anti-Racism & Epistemology

- recognize that colonialism, race, and EuroAmerican epistemology and ontology are foundations of linguistics
 - reflect critically on how the history of the field informs assumptions about what we do, why we do it, how we do it, and who we do it for, including explicit reflection of who the ‘we’ is [and who ‘we’ has not been, traditionally]
 - acknowledge that “science” is not neutral or asocial
 - recognize erasure/harm/gaps/shortcomings in theory (e.g. the focus on WEIRD languages)

Indigenization, Decolonization, Anti-Racism & Epistemology

- recognize that colonialism, race, and EuroAmerican epistemology and ontology are foundations of linguistics
 - de-center English (cf. the Bender Rule), whiteness (cf. the Holliday Rule), speech
 - decolonize & Indigenize praxis (theory, curriculum, methods)
 - recognize Indigenous rights to sovereignty and governance
 - center marginalized voices & perspectives
 - build anti-racist and inclusive pedagogy

Publishing and KM

- reconsider knowledge mobilization (paywalls restrict access and impact) and valorize 'non-traditional' KM strategies
- query what we mean by 'does not meet publishing standards' and 'does not meet scholarly requirements'
 - whose standards count? who decides? what is the basis of those standards?
- diversify with intention editorial boards and teams
- revisit editorial principles with EDID in mind
 - who may be left out? was this by intention or is it water-related?
- engage with large publishers and advocate (hard) for indexing of specialist and 'small field' journals in metrics (e.g. Scopus)

Reappointment, Promotion & Tenure, Mentorship

- unite on RPT standard and definitions of excellence that support all Canadian linguists
 - include clear language regarding interdisciplinarity, community engaged teaching, research and other forms of scholarship, community responsibility and relationships, public outreach and scholarship, and collaborative work (including the fact that these are not mutually exclusive categories)
 - re-imagine in concrete terms who the 'peer' is in peer review and legitimize this expanded understanding in RPT processes
 - encourage narratives of impact (cf. new Tri-Agency CV format, UVic CA) as opposed to/in addition to/in lieu of standard CV and counting metrics
 - mentor with intention junior and mid-career colleagues

“The CLA is committed to infusing the principles of equity, inclusion, diversity, and decolonization into all of its activities.”

Meeting this commitment is a collective responsibility.

Suggested readings (a small sampling)

- pretty much anything by Wesley Leonard
- [Natives4Linguistics](#)
- LSA statement from Indigenous linguists and language scholars on Boarding and Residential Schools. 2021. <https://www.linguisticsociety.org/sites/default/files/Statement%20from%20Indigenous%20linguists%20and%20language%20scholars%20on%20Boarding%20and%20Residential%20Schools%20%281%29.pdf>
- Charity Hudley, A.H., C. Mallinson & M. Bucholtz. 2020. Toward racial justice in linguistics: Interdisciplinary insights into theorizing race in the discipline and diversifying the profession. *Language* 96(4):e200-e235.
- Czaykowska-Higgins, E. 2009. Research models, community engagement, and linguistic fieldwork: reflections on working within Canadian Indigenous communities. *Language Documentation & Conservation* 3:15-50.
- Figueroa, M. 2022. Podcasting past the paywall: how diverse media allows more equitable participation in linguistic science. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 42:40-46.
- Flores, N. & J. Rosa. 2015. Undoing appropriateness: Raciolinguistic ideologies and language diversity in education. *Harvard Educational Review* 85(2):149-171.
- Henner, J. & O. Robinson. 2021. Unsettling languages, unruly bodyminds: Imagining a crip linguistics. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/7bzaw>
- Majid, A. & S.C. Levinson. 2010. WEIRD languages have misled us, too. *Behavioral Brain Sciences* 33(2/3):103.
- Tsikewa, A. 2021. Reimagining the current praxis of field linguistics training: decolonial considerations. *Language* 97(4):e293-319.
- Zuberi, T. & E. Bonilla-Silva. 2008. *White logic, white methods: Racism and methodology*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.