Doing Justice to and in Linguistics

When scholars and governments talk about models of language management for linguistically diverse societies, states such as Switzerland, Canada, and Belgium are often invoked as key exemplars. Political philosophers especially look to these few Western nations as they seemingly embrace their linguistic diversity by according far-reaching language recognition and language rights to the various existing language groups, thereby realizing linguistic justice. The conversation on linguistic justice however has been dominated by political scientists and philosophers so far, and linguists almost entirely side-lined in this debate. In addition, Singapore, as well as many Asian postcolonial states, have also largely been left out of many of these discussions found in the literature. In this talk, I aim to offer some thoughts about how linguists, especially those of us working in and on Asia, can contribute meaningfully to the issue of linguistic justice, and how theorizing linguistic justice along linguistic lines can provide a new avenue for linguistics to move in a different direction.

Speaker

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