

Bringing Linguistics to the Public: Developing Metalinguistic Awareness through Accessible Pedagogy

The field of linguistics holds tremendous potential to spark meaningful conversations about language in everyday life. This presentation emphasizes the need to make linguistic education more accessible and relevant to non-specialist audiences. Building on the work of esteemed linguists like William Labov, John Rickford, Deborah Tannen, and others who have brought sociolinguistic research into the public eye, my talk explores how contemporary content creators (documentary filmmakers, YouTubers, bloggers, and podcasters) are continuing this legacy by engaging broader audiences, even without the traditional credentials of peer-reviewed academic publications.

My project focuses on developing pedagogical materials that foster *metalinguistic awareness* among students and the public, helping individuals better understand and discuss language variation and change. These resources simplify complex sociolinguistic topics, making them more approachable for diverse audiences. My work is part of the CRiSoll (Critical Sociocultural Linguistic Literacy) initiative, an open-source digital archive that provides language educators with tools rooted in critical pedagogies like Raciolinguistics and Sociocultural Linguistics. CRiSoll's materials are designed to inspire critical reflection on language ideologies and encourage conversations around linguistic diversity and social justice.

This presentation will highlight the activities and resources I have developed for CRiSoll, demonstrating how linguistics can be a force for social change by equipping educators and students with the tools to engage thoughtfully with real-world language phenomena.

Marco Shappeck is a Professor of Linguistics at the University of North Texas at Dallas. He specializes in sociolinguistics, with a focus on language contact, variation, and change, particularly in multilingual communities. His research spans Spanish-English bilingualism in the U.S. Southwest and Spanish-Quichua bilingualism in the Ecuadorian Andes, exploring how life stages and social identity influence language learning and usage. Dr. Shappeck has conducted extensive linguistic and ethnographic fieldwork and has published widely on topics like grammaticalization processes, language ideologies, and the sociolinguistic experiences of elderly Latino immigrants, as explored in his co-authored book *Aging in a Second Language*.