

Linguistic Justice in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: A Conversation



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Today's questions

- What is linguistic justice? What is GenAI?
- What's the relationship between linguistic justice and GenAI?
- What are the concerns about GenAI and linguistic justice in the higher education classroom?
- What strategies can we use to address these concerns?



Why Linguistic Justice?



- ***Linguistic Justice*** is one missing piece in our commitment to I-EDIAA.
- Language remains an overlooked issue in higher education, subtly acting as a catalyst for inequity within campus life (Wolfram, 2023).
- “We do not, cannot under our law ask a person to change the color of skin, religion, gender, sexual identity, but we regularly demand of people that they suppress or deny the most effective way they have of situating themselves socially in the world” (Lippi-Green, 2012, P. 66).

Hegemony of English

The hegemony of English refers to situations—including in education—where English is so dominant that inequity and discrimination take place in communication.

English functions and is widely recognized as a global standard language today and is the lingua franca of academia.

Non-English speakers are often expected to learn English but face discrimination for the varieties of English they use.

The hegemony of English is a social and political issue that should be addressed beyond individual gain or loss.

(Tsuda, 2010)

Standard(ized) English



- Standard English is often assumed to be the “correct” form of English and is considered a “neutral” dialect available equally to everyone (Davilla, 2016).
- What we refer to as standard English, including academic English, is perhaps better understood as "White Mainstream English" (Baker-Bell, 2020).
- This dialect is tied to colonial power throughout the history of North America, a power that persists in our educational institutions (Flores and Rosa, 2015).

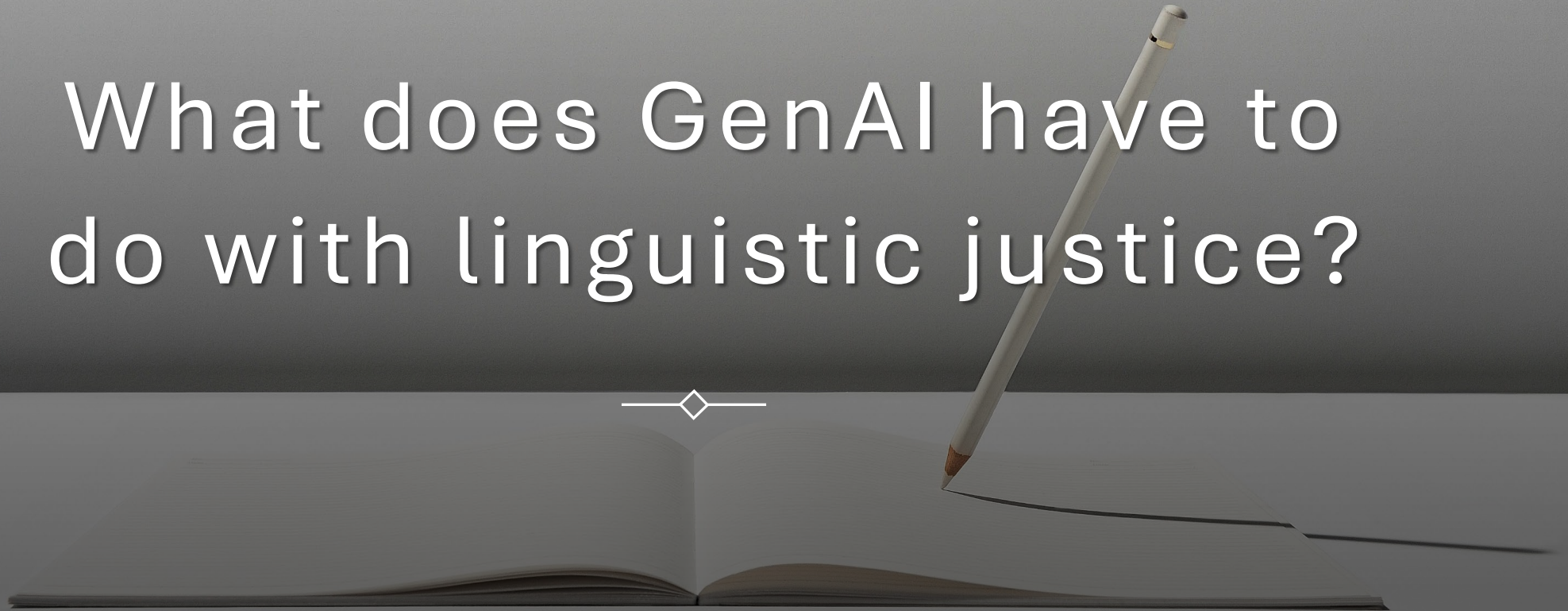
In fact...

Scientific studies of language do not acknowledge a single variety or “standard” of any spoken language; “standards” are regarded as social constructs (Wolfram, 2023).

Each language and dialect has its own history of use, its own history of tying people together through social, political, and economic happenings in specific communities (Gee, 2015).

Language variety is not connected with intelligence or scholarly achievement (North Carolina State University, 2016).

What does GenAI have to
do with linguistic justice?



What is generative artificial intelligence?



- **Generative AI (GenAI)** tools use artificial intelligence to create—or generate—new artifacts, including text, images, computer code, videos, music, etc.

- **Large language model (LLM):** A computational model that is trained on a vast text-based dataset and capable of predicting the next word in a sequence based on a given context.

ChatGPT and other GenAI tools are examples of **limited artificial intelligence**; they don't possess self-awareness or theory of mind.

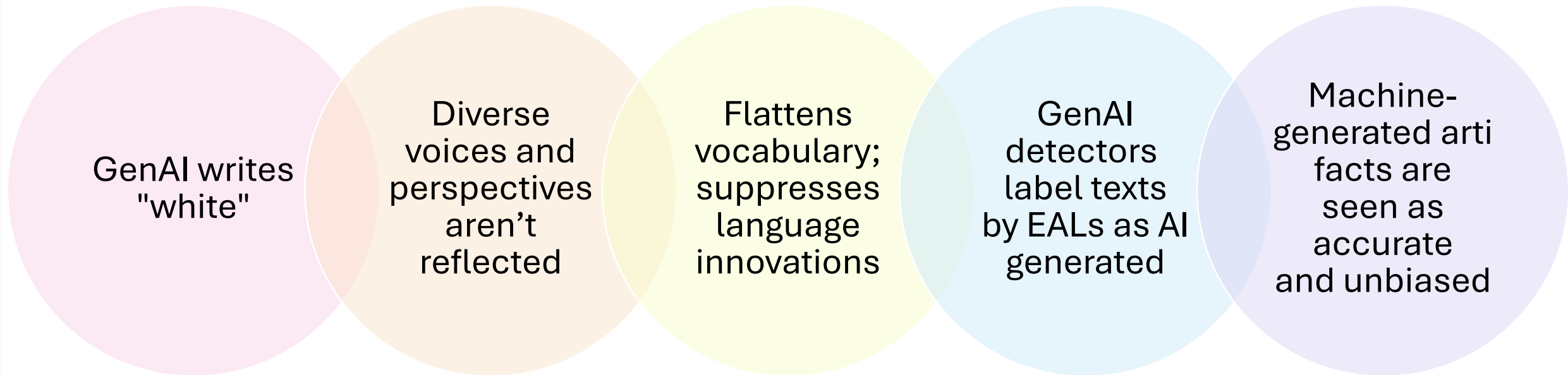
Bias is inherent to GenAI tools

1. Machine bias
2. Availability bias
3. Confirmation bias
4. Group attribution bias
5. Linguistic bias



DALL-E, "A professor lecturing to a class of university students."

Linguistic justice and GenAI: Some frictions



Let's practice! ChatGPT as editor

Remember our sample text on global warming from earlier? We asked ChatGPT to provide some suggestions to improve the clarity and concision of the writing.

- What do you think about ChatGPT's feedback? Are there any specific comments that concern you?
- If you were the writer, which changes would you accept? Which would you reject?
- How do the changes impact the writer's work? The reader's perception of the author?

Moving Linguistic Justice Forward in Higher Ed



“We argue that the rise of GenAI necessitates a reimagining of academic writing conventions to place students—and their voices—at the center through the lens of linguistic justice (Thompson & Pokhrel, 2024).”



Suggested Strategies

- **Teaching:** Discuss GenAI with students—how it works and why the writing style might be problematic—especially if you allow students to use GenAI tools.
- **Learner agency:** Allow students to express themselves in their language/variety of English. Engage students in conversation about their linguistic choices.
- **Assessment design:** Use a variety of assessment strategies and make assignment expectations clear.
- **Evaluation:** Reflect on your own language and stylistic preferences when assessing student work. Are you correcting “errors” or guiding students?
- **Feedback:** Take an anti-deficit approach. When students make an unconventional choice, describe the effect rather than marking the text as "unnatural" or "awkward."

Queen's Resources

SASS module

- [Using Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools](#)

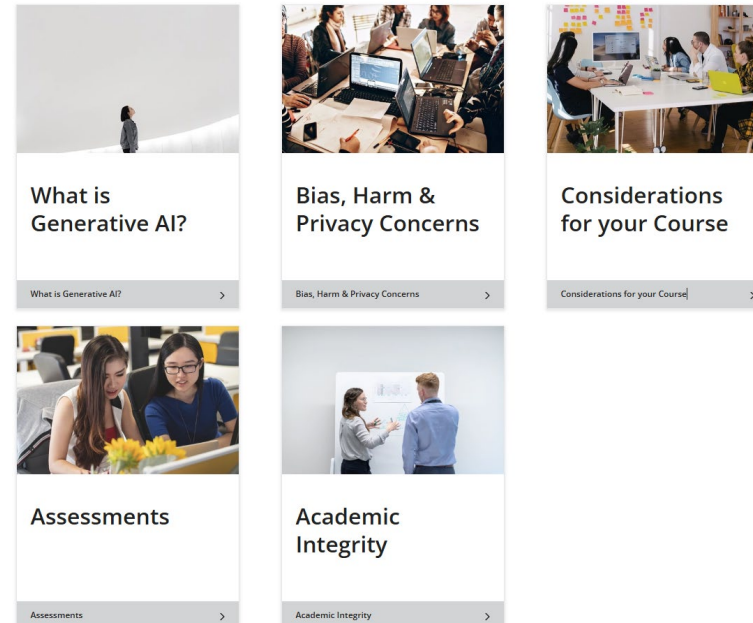


Using Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools

START COURSE

CTL Resources

- [Generative AI in Teaching and Learning](#)



Other resources and further reading

- Contact North/Nord, AI in Higher Education: Resource Hub: <https://teachonline.ca/ai-resources>
- metaLAB@Harvard, AI Pedagogy Project: <https://aipedagogy.org/>
- Anna Mills, AI Text Generators and Teaching Writing: Starting Points for Inquiry: <https://wac.colostate.edu/repository/collections/ai-text-generators-and-teaching-writing-starting-points-for-inquiry/>
- MIT Sloan Teaching & Learning Technologies, Generative AI for Teaching and Learning: <https://mitsloanedtech.mit.edu/ai/>
- MLA-CCCC Joint Task Force on Writing and AI: <https://aiandwriting.hcommons.org/>
- Annette Vee, Tim Laquintano, and Carly Schnitzler, *TextGenEd: Teaching with Text Generation Technologies*: <https://wac.colostate.edu/repository/collections/textgened/>

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